



2

可憐い女の子に
攻略されるのは
好きですか？

Do you like
to be captured
by a cute girl?

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「ふふ、私の奴隷になって
永遠に快楽の中で悶えるといいわ……」

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なんじょう きさ



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Prologue

“Hey, how about we blow up the party hall?!”

The person who threw that ridiculous notion into the room was the seven year old Nanjou Kisa.

“.....Huh?”

Mikado who was pulled to this assembly hall by the current head of the Kitamikado Family, raised his eyebrow in response.

“This whole party is boring, isn’t it? There are no performers to look at and the adult talk is too complicated to interest me. Wouldn’t everyone be happier if we just blew up this entire hall?”

“They can’t be happy if they’re dead!”

Kisa put one hand on her hip.

“You will never know if you don’t challenge yourself.”

“Don’t challenge yourself! You’ll get scolded, nothing more!”

“It’s fine... Everyone that could scold me will be gone...”

“That’s terrifying! Anyway, don’t do anything unnecessary! Promise me that, okay?!”

Mikado emphasized his point a few times and separated from Kisa. He had heard about the Nanjou Family’s craziness and fearfulness, but seeing the real deal was completely different. Causing a ruckus in a place like this, where all the influential people of the political and economic world gathered, wouldn’t just be taken as a joke.

The party hall reserved inside the six star hotel ‘Espacio’ might be rather simple, but it was one of the most suitable places for meetings like this. Standing around the successor of the Kitamikado family of politicians’ successor were many worshippers, almost overwhelming

him.

“Ohh, the young man from the Kitamikado Family looks promising.”

“He responds to everything properly too, you really wouldn’t think he’s only seven.”

“This is our precious daughter, so please get along with her... I guarantee you that she will grow up to be a wonderful wife.”

Smile. Smile. Smile.

Mikado was surrounded by an enclave of smiles. Naturally, even the young Mikado knew that these were nothing but forced facades.

“Thank you. Please support the Kitamikado Family just as you always have.”

And so on, he remained calm and dignified, while he let out a sigh inside his heart. It was boring, just as Nanjou Kisa had stated. Of course, this was not something he could openly admit, but he couldn’t stop himself growing bored of the masses. However, putting up with them was also part of the job of being a Kitamikado. He was required to never show any openings and bear no weaknesses to become the guiding light of Japan. However, before he could adopt the mentality fit for that, something happened.

In the center of the hall, there was a cake enshrined on a table, which was approached slowly but steadily by Kisa. From the beneath the sleeve of her cute skirt, he spotted a cylindrical and dangerous looking object... Frankly speaking, it looked like an explosive device.

“Hey!”

Unconsciously, he let out a scream that wasn’t fit for the Kitamikado Family successor. Covering it up with a kind smile, he made up some excuse and left them alone. He didn’t have the time to call for security.

“What are you doing?!”

“I’m trying to put a candle on the cake,” Kisa smiled, as she held a

stick of dynamite in her hand.

“That’s way too thick for a candle! And I can clearly see the fuse!”

“Yes... For people with a tainted heart, that’s what it might look like...”

“Everybody would be able to see this! Don’t make me the bad guy in this scenario!”

“I can’t see it, you know? Besides, this is the candle that will make this party go ‘Boom’, tehe~”

“What do you mean boom?! A candle doesn’t make that sound, you know?!”

“For people with a tainted heart, that’s what it—”

“Stop with that already! Anyway, hand it over!”

“Kya!”

Mikado took the explosive from Kisa, to which she shrugged her shoulders.

“How boring. Well, you can keep that one.”

Muttering something ominous-sounding to herself, Kisa dove beneath the table cloth.

“No need to hide it. The security will dig it all up anyway.”

As Mikado followed her beneath the table, he was greeted by Kisa putting her index finger on her lips.

“Shhhh, it’ll begin soon, so just watch it from the special seat you have now. It’ll be really fun, I tell you.”

Kisa’s eyes were sparkling as she said that in a teasing tone. From afar, she was already a beauty to behold, but getting closer to her like this, her facial features were so cute that Mikado couldn’t help but be entranced. Almost transparent white skin, her breath as sweet as milk

and a slender bridged nose. Even by Mikado's standards, no other girl his age currently present could compare to her. The only girl he knew in general that might be able to was his fiancée Shizukawa Rinka. Not being used to contact with the opposite gender this close, Mikado could feel his cheeks growing hotter by the second as he gazed at Kisa.

“Special seat...? What are you talking about...?”

Right after he spoke those words, he heard explosion sounds from above the table. The cake flew into the air, the cream dispersed everywhere, with the strawberries being shot all over the room. Every millionaire present close enough to the cake had their suits and hair turned white. Seeing that happen to even his own father, the head of the Kitamikado Family—

“P-Pffft...F-Father...” Mikado couldn't hold back a giggle.

And Kisa didn't miss that.

“Ah, you just laughed! You did, right? That means you're my accomplice, right?!”

“Why does it end up like that!? Is your head filled with cream or something?!”

“Let's hurry and run away! It'll be bad if you get caught!”

“Why do I have to...?”

No matter how much Mikado complained, the teasing fairy of a girl didn't listen. Pulling on Mikado's sleeve, Kisa dashed away from beneath the table. As soon as that happened, the surrounding gazes all gathered on them.

“Mikado! Did you do this?!”

His father let out a cry of anger, his face as white as a cloud.

“The young master of the Kitamikado's did?!”

“Impossible...!”

“How could this happen!?”

The other millionaires were equally creamed in the face. Meanwhile, Kisa and Mikado were making a mad dash to the entrance. Finally, the world opened up for them as they were freed from the strong stench of perfume and champagne.

“That was fun, right?!”

“It wasn’t fun at all!”

“But you were laughing, weren’t you!? Now it’s not boring anymore, right!?”

“That’s not important! What should we do about this!? We have to come up with an explanation!”

Although he complained like that, he couldn’t help but be entranced by Kisa, astonished that there was someone as weird as her in this world.

Chapter 1: Challenger

Student life. In other words, a battlefield. Even without a single gunshot ring or waves of bombardments raining down, it is undoubtedly a battlefield. All your words and deeds influence your life in the grand scheme of things, and just with a slight bit of carelessness, you will lose your footing. At the very least, that was the case for Kitamikado Mikado and his enemy, Nanjou Kisa.

“.....!!!”

“.....!!!”

As they happened to meet this morning in the classroom, both of them put themselves on guard, if only for a second. For this very second, it might have just looked like two classmates passing each other, but in reality it wasn't something as peaceful as that.

—Confirmation of her enlarged pupils. She's in a state of preparing for war, huh?

Just in that one second, Mikado checked the status of Kisa's pupils, changing his body stance to be on guard. As always, the enemy showed no opening whatsoever, an appearance perfect enough to make Mikado hesitate. Her long, magnificent hair was illuminated even further thanks to the morning sun and holding insane seductive powers, her well-endowed chest. The reason for her slightly reddened cheeks was mostly likely her burning will to win this battle. Just by watching the girl like this, Mikado took a million damage points.

—Ugh, she's so cute today as well!!

He cursed inside his heart, as he tried to suppress the urge to embrace her that instant by fisting his hands. His nails bit into his own flesh and he managed to regain his reasoning thanks to the light pain. At the same time, Kisa finished scanning Mikado's current condition and her lips opened like a flower petal. Once the appraisal was done, the real battle would ensue.

In order for Mikado to intercept whatever attack she would throw at him, Mikado came up with 3 all-nighters worth of sample sentences, predicting whatever scenario. However, Nanjou Kisa was known to come up with attacks outside of his expectations.

“G-Good morning... Mi...Mi-mi-mi-mi...Mimikado-san!”

“Who is Mimikado?!”

Most likely out of embarrassment, it was typical for Kisa to not follow through with her attempts of calling Mikado by his first name. However, that was the same for Mikado himself. Although their distance should have shrunk a huge chunk after returning from the deserted island, getting used to this distance was another problem altogether. After putting her hands on her reddened cheeks in order to cool them down, Kisa threw a sharp glare at the boy.

“Even though our eyes met, you wouldn’t even greet me, just what went wrong with your education in the Kitamikado Family? Go on, greet me. Say ‘I love you, please go out with me!’ right now!”

“That’s not a greeting, that’s a confession!”

“My, what a rude tone. Your way of speaking leaves much to be desired.”

“Just what kind of point of view do you hold?!”

“The point of view of a god of course!”

“So high?!”

Originally, the Kitamikado Family and Nanjou Family should be the ones ruling Japan from the light and shadows respectively. If Kisa proclaimed herself as a god, she would be an evil one.

Mikado let out a sigh.

“For crying out loud... Picking a fight this early in the morning...”

“But, you were happy, right?”

“Not at all.”

“That’s a lie. Being greeted by me, being able to talk with me, you must have no regrets in life anymore, right?”

“Get off your high horse. I’m not happy at all.”

“Then I’ll go erase friend after friend of yours until you are happy.”

“I’m feeling even less happy now!”

As it turns out, Kisa was far worse than the incarnation of the scariest and most terrifying evil god. Even if she had a cute appearance, she still was a princess born and raised in the dark side of the world. The two of them continued to glare at each other, and just when Kokage readied her camera to snap a picture of that (crawling along the floor), the homeroom teacher entered the classroom just in time to stop it.

“Sit down already, will you? The bell already rang!”

Being warned by the teacher’s sharp words, the students all headed for their own seats. While still glaring at Mikado, Kisa reluctantly followed suit. Shortly after, the homeroom teacher went to gaze around the class, standing behind their desk.

“Seems like everyone’s here. Alright, then I’ll go ahead and introduce a new student to you all.”

The moment the teacher finished that sentence, a breeze of noise blew through the classroom. And that was to be expected. Having a transfer student join one’s own class was an irregularity that rarely happened, if at all. At the same time, one question wandered through the rows of students. Would this transfer student be... an enemy? Or an ally? If this new transfer student caused a deformation of current class groups and cliques, they would be facing social suicide.

Meanwhile, Kisa just flashed her usual confident smile, letting out a mischievous giggle.

“Fufu... A new comrade, is it...? Now, I wonder how many days they will be able to last...”

“I think our definitions of ‘comrade’ differ greatly. You have no plans whatsoever to make this person your friend, right?”

As Mikado showed a fed-up expression, Kisa shook her head in a saddened manner.

“That’s not the case. I’ll accept them from the bottom of my heart. If they swear unconditional allegiance towards me, that is.”

“So they better be a slave, or they’re out, huh?”

“Let’s start with having them carry 100 kg of oil barrels. If they get used to it, we’ll move on to a pyramid.”

“How about you start with realizing what time period we are in!?”

While the two of them were having a verbal front yet again, the teacher started moving towards the door to slide it open. Following that were soft footsteps and the sweet fragrance of perfume. Long hair fluttered behind as their pupils shook heavily, gazing around the classroom in search of something. Just as the girl entered the classroom, a spark ran through the lines of students.

“Eh...?” Having not expected her here, Mikado’s eyes opened wide.

“Wha... Wha...” Kisa on her part jolted up from her seat, as her shoulders shook furiously.

After gathering the attention of the entire class, the girl—Shizukawa Rinka, gracefully stopped next to the teacher’s podium.

“For now, how about you give us a short introduction?”

After the homeroom teacher advised her to, Shizukawa Rinka bowed deeply.

“I have come here from Shirase Girls’ Academy. My name is Shizukawa Rinka. Everyone, please treat me well.”

Her elegant conduct and dignified gaze, everything about her was an irregularity in today’s times. At the same time, the classmates were unable to hold back their excitement any longer, as their voices flew

around the classroom.

“She’s a beauty like from some historical play!”

“I can see it... Even though she’s wearing our uniform, I can perfectly see the kimono on her...!”

“Shirase Girls Academy, isn’t that the school with all the sheltered girls?!”

“A godsend!”

Tumult reigned the classroom. Conditionally, Kisa threw a sharp gaze over at Mikado.

“Mikado... I won’t forgive you.”

“Why did you get mad at me?! I haven’t heard about this before either!”

“Then who should I throw this anger at?!”

“Maybe not people?!”

“Then I’ll throw it at this rotten world! I’ll just destroy all the irrationalities and injustice in this world!”

“Leave the world out of this! Do something about it yourself!”

“And I can’t do that!” Kisa stomped her feet on the ground beneath her desk.

Meanwhile, Mikado tilted his head in confusion, wondering why his father didn’t inform him about Rinka changing schools. Following that, the homeroom teacher asked Rinka.

“That’s all? No hobbies or anything? You could try to work a bit harder for your debut, you know?”

“Well then... It might be a bit different to a hobby, but I feel like there is something that I definitely have to tell everyone right here.”

Rinka narrowed her eyes, as she gazed directly at Kisa.

“Don’t tell me...” Kisa’s face stiffened up.

“I am actually the fiance of dear Kitamikado Mikado-sama... It was arranged by both our families. In order to be as close as I could to my future husband, I have transferred to this school. I hope that you look over the two of us in the future.”

Yet another ruckus broke out in the classroom.

“I am terribly sorry for announcing myself like that without asking for your consent, Mikado-sama. Did I trouble you by any chance...?”

Once first period ended, Rinka walked over to Mikado’s seat with a worried expression. She was wearing a fresh new uniform of Sousei Academy, but that didn’t take away her dignified atmosphere she was emitting.

“No, not that much... But, why didn’t you tell me beforehand?”

If Mikado knew of this, he would have moved in a way to stop the transfer. He was regretful of his failure. Naturally, it wasn’t a matter of hating Rinka by any means, but rather that having her spend time in the same space as Kisa would be dangerous. Especially for Rinka herself, knowing Kisa’s violent tendencies. On top of that, Rinka might be wrapped up in the love game between the two.

“That’s...well...” Rinka gazed over at Kisa with a worried expression.

“...Ahhh.” Mikado immediately grasped her intention.

She must have been worried that Kisa would use whatever means necessary to stop a successful transfer. The right decision, Mikado couldn’t agree any more.

“But, now I will always be together with Mikado-sama. During class, during break, during lunch break, even on our way home and after that.”

“Y-Yeah...”

Mikado forced out a bitter smile, as he seriously pondered how far she was going to follow him. However, retorting to that wasn't something he could do after seeing how gleeful Rinka was.

Suddenly, their classmates, eyes filled with curiosity, approached. Although it wasn't rare for girls of the upper caste, of the elite, to visit Sousei Academy, a fiancée was still a rare sight. On top of that, the Kitamikado Family was probably the only family in the school that still upheld such old traditions.

Then a few of the girls in their class stormed over to Rinka, asking with a rather complicated expression.

"H-Hey, since you're his fiancée, that means that you must be doing a lot already, right?"

"A lot...?" Rinka tilted her head to the side, not fully grasping what the girl was referring to.

"For example, dates or going out... Since both your families agreed to it, you'd be fine no matter what you did, right?"

"Now that you say it... We did go on a date before, yes."

Ohhhhhh! Their classmates murmured voices of admiration.

"Then then, what about a kiss?!"

Rinka shook her head.

"It's a shame... but not yet."

"So that means that you want to, Shizukawa-san?!"

"Of course I do. There shouldn't be any wife that doesn't wish to receive the lips of her husband."

"Shizukawa-san is so bold!"

"So this is a fiancée's dignity!"

"No chance of winning, huh..."

“Her face looks like a maiden in love!”

His classmates all got excited at Rinka’s response. Although Mikado thought he heard affection towards him coming from someone besides Kisa in there, he was unable to focus on that with the noise surrounding him. At the same time, Kisa was exuding killing intent of a level that could even kill a god. From her lovable, delicate shoulders leaked a dark, ominous aura. Mikado feared for his life. Although the event that someone from the Kitamikado Family was scared by a single high school student should never happen, this overflowing killing intent was too much for him to handle. Not to mention that the people around them showed no signs of realizing the imminent danger. Meanwhile, Rinka grasped her hands together and gazed up at Mikado in an inquiring manner.

“Mikado-sama... When are you planning on finally kissing me?”

“Ehhhh... Well, I wonder... Maybe when we enter a nuclear shelter...”

“And what nuclear shelter are we talking about?”

“Ehmmm... Maybe the one in Minnesota... Or Alabama...” Mikado evaded.

“Hey, Kitamikado-kun!”

“It’s not good to just dodge the question like that!”

“Right right! Rinka-chan is serious after all, so you have to answer her feelings!”

“Just kiss her right here!”

“See, we’ll all be watching you!”

His classmates were closing in on Mikado even more fiercely, trying to force him into some embarrassing stage-play. At the same time, he heard a weird swinging sound coming from beneath Kisa’s desk. Some sort of firearm, Mikado guessed. No mistaking it, it was a lethal weapon. Following that, Kisa stared at them, indwelling rage burning in her eyes, like a demon out for blood. This is it. They’re all done

for. Mikado had no doubts about that.

Kokage on her part seemed to have spotted the item, as she crouched down on the ground, shaking furiously.

“R-Run... Run away...”

She appealed like that, but because of her fearful condition, she couldn't force her voice out. In the end, the dangerous sound of that object still resounded in Mikado's eardrums, even during class.

Third period was chemistry.

In order to change classrooms Mikado was about to leave the current one, but Kisa followed after him. Lining up next to him with workbook and notebook in hand, she muttered.

“How good for you that your cute fiance came all this way. Nothing to be dissatisfied about, being constantly told how much someone likes you, right?” Her tone sounded a bit like she was sulking.

Though Mikado had gotten his hopes up for a second with the thought that she might have been jealous, he quickly rid himself of that false optimism. Kisa was just his enemy during the love game, the bitter enemy of the Kitamikado Family, not his lover.

“It's true that Rinka is cute, and I'm happy about her feelings... but she still is only my fiance.”

“So you're not satisfied with going on a date with Shizukawa-san?”

“I guess.”

“Then, you'd prefer it if we went on a date for our love game?”

“Well, yeah.”

“So you're saying that you want to go on a date with me?”

“That's what it boils— Wait, don't just lead me into answering like that!”

Mikado barely managed to stop himself mid-sentence. He was about to admit, albeit small, affection towards Kisa. At the same time, Kisa audibly clicked her tongue.

“I’m not leading you or anything. Just a small psychological test, is all. So just answer how I want you to. Your own opinion doesn’t matter anymore.”

“What meaning is there if you ignore my own feelings!? It ain’t even a psychological test anymore!”

“Of course it is. Anyway, question two. The plane you’re on is about to crash. However, according to the pilot’s judgement, you can save everyone on the plane just by going on a date with Nanjou Kisa. So, do you want to go on a date with Nanjou Kisa?”

“What do you mean judgement of the pilot?! As if that would change anything!”

Mikado wanted a third option where he could jump off with a parachute.

“The lives of the passengers are dependent on your choice... And you still don’t want to go on a date with me, how fiendish and cruel you are!”

“I don’t want to hear that from you, who is using lives of imaginary people to force me into saying things I don’t want to... Wait, are you indirectly asking me out on a date?”

Mikado asked just out of a whim, but Kisa’s face turned bright red.

“H-Huh?! A-A-A-As if that was the case! That would mean that it’s my loss!”

“Figures...”

“And even if it didn’t spell my defeat, inviting you on a date is just...”

“Eh?”

“N-N-N-Nothing at all!” Kisa quickly averted her face.

Her earlobes, burning bright red, were endearing to look at. Trying her hardest to hold the workbook and notebooks in her arms, she looked like a cute hamster.

—I see... So Kisa actually can be embarrassed about this sort of thing...

If this whole love game didn't exist, no, if this whole Kitamikado and Nanjou rivalry didn't exist, then Mikado might have taken Kisa on a date right now. But, as if to disrupt those thoughts, Rinka came walking after the two of them.

"Mikado-sama, would you mind if we went to the next classroom together?"

"I don't mind."

"Thank god. I was so scared about what would have happened if you had said no..." Rinka put both her hands together, as a smile bloomed on her face like a flower.

"I don't see any reason to decline though."

As of today, they were classmates, on top of being fiances, so saying no about something trivial like that would bring the Kitamikado Family shame. Not to mention that Mikado felt grateful for Rinka's willingness to keep quiet about the rather close relationship he and Kisa had towards their respective families. Although it would enable her to completely rid herself of Kisa as a rival, Rinka never showed any consideration towards that.

—I'm more worried about Kisa leaking it herself!

With those thoughts, Mikado looked over to his left, where Kisa was walking. Besides throwing Rinka the usual killing intent-filled gaze, there seemed to be no other problems.

"However, I thought I was being a bother. After all, Mikado-sama has someone he likes—"

"Come with me for a second, will you!?"

Mikado quickly grabbed Rinka, pulling her to the nearby stairwell. Pushing her against the wall, he closed off her mouth just to be sure.

“M-Mikado-sama... Kissing me in a place like this, how indecent...” Rinka muttered, as her face started to burn up.

“I’m not kissing you or anything!”

“I really don’t mind though... As long as Mikado-sama wishes for it, the place or time does not matter to me... It is my duty as a wife to fulfill any desires you might have... Just, take care that your reputation doesn’t suffer...”

“Listen to me! Listen to other people talk! I don’t want her to find out about my feelings, okay?”

“Why is that? It would be much faster to just tell her.”

“It’ll mean the end of my life! Do you think that I would be left alone if the Nanjou Family were to grasp such a weakness of mine?”

“...Ahh! Now that you say it, something horrible would most likely happen to the Kitamikado Family.”

“Exactly...”



Although Mikado couldn't lay bare the fact that the love game existed, he seemed to have succeeded in making Rinka keep quiet about his feelings.

“If you were to end up as Nanjou-san’s slave, Japan might just be drowned in complete darkness.”

“Exactly...”

She already guessed the general outcome herself.

“Being devoured greedily every evening, Mikado-sama would eventually lose his vigor and political power, and once you manage to run away, completely worn out, I would pick you up like a stray cat in the rain at the corner of a street.”

“Rinka! Rinka, come back!” Mikado pleaded as the wheels of Rinka’s fantasy began spinning to no end.

“This means it is a secret between Mikado-sama and I, right?”

“Right. As far as I know, nobody seems to have caught on yet.”

“Though it pains me to know that Mikado-sama is always looking at Nanjou-san, I am a bit happy to have gained a secret between husband and wife.” Rinka muttered to herself, a bit flustered.

“I-I see...”

Mikado greatly appreciated the fact that Rinka had offered to keep it a secret. However, at the same time, he felt guilt crush down his good heart, realizing that he was basically taking advantage of her affection towards him. Hence, being too honest and diligent for his own good, Mikado swore to eventually pay back this debt to Rinka.

“Then, let’s hurry up and...”

Letting out a relieved sigh, Mikado separated from Rinka, and turned around—

“Police...Police... If I call the police, he’ll be arrested for assaulting a woman...”

He was greeted by Kisa, fidgeting on her phone, as if all life had washed away from her eyes.

"I'm not doing any of that! And don't you dare call the police, you're the worst criminal between the three of us!"

"Ara, these idiots from the police aren't necessarily our enemy...They just exist to be used by us. You should know that, shouldn't you?"

"How would I?! Don't just make governmental authority look like a joke! What do you think they are!?"

"My chair...? No, a leg rest...? Oh, I know. A doormat."

"How arrogant can you be...?"

"Becoming my doormat is a privilege, Mikado."

"You're telling me to become one now?!"

While another harsh verbal battle broke out between the two of them, Rinka was shaking in despair.

"Mikado-sama will be arrested...? I-It'll be fine, I'll wait for you no matter how long it takes!"

"I don't need that sort of comfort! Don't just give up that easily!"

"Don't worry, once Mikado turns into a fugitive, the Nanjou Family will gladly shelter him."

"Don't make it sound like you're my saviour, you'll just imprison me!"

In order to keep the police quiet, Mikado immediately went ahead and called the Kitamikado Family disposal department.

After classes had ended, it was time for Mikado and Kisa to work as library committee members and catalogue books. Naturally, it was just the two of them. Although there should be other library committee members from other classes, through some mysterious force, they always seemed to end up alone. As they entered the library, Kisa let out a deep sigh.

"Really... Finally a place without that nuisance of a girl... Now we

can finally start our battle without anyone coming to bother us...”

“That’s fine, but stop sealing up the window, will you?”

Mikado quickly went to stop Kisa as she was about to seal the windows with thick tape. Before he even realized it, she had already finished taping up the door.

“Well, if I don’t, you might just call for help in the one in a million chance, Mikado.”

“Please leave me some room to escape, okay...?”

“And also, things might get complicated if someone were to peek in on us and see us during a difficult situation...”

“What kind of situation are we talking about?” Mikado asked, to which Kisa averted her gaze.

“T-Troublesome situations... For example, if Mikado would...with me...and...”

“What would make it troublesome? Come on, say it out loud.”

“Uuuuu...” Kisa grit her teeth in embarrassment.

Apparently, she couldn’t manage to say it out loud herself. And that gesture stabbed at Mikado’s chest. At the same time, Kisa glared up at him.

“L-Let me turn it around! Wouldn’t you be the most troubled if someone saw us doing perverted things together in a place like this?!”

“Wha?!”

Mikado couldn’t allow himself to imagine it. But even so, his thoughts were too stimulated by Kisa’s words. It was just the two of them inside this deserted room and Kisa was a beauty to behold. Depending on the development, anything could happen. Meaning that, although he tried his best to keep them down, his adolescent thoughts got the jump on him.

“Ara...ara ara...?”

Kisa watched that change of condition happen and let out a giggle.

“What’s wrong Mikado, getting so red? Just what kind of indecent things have you been imagining?”

“...Nothing at all.”

“That’s a lie. The eyes with which you’re looking at me turned into those of a beast. Come on, say it. Just what have you been imagining in that head of yours...?”

The tables were turned. Having confirmed her own advantage in the situation, Kisa closed in on Mikado, a soft voice coming from her pink, beautiful lips, while her sweet aroma played with his reasoning.

“It’s okay... Mikado. If you want it, I will fulfill your every wish. All you have to do is say ‘I want you, Kisa’, and give in...”

“Ugh...” Mikado formed a fist with his hand.

Of course he wanted to. From the very beginning, he had trouble holding back his urges. However, he couldn’t afford to lose. The fate of Japan was resting on his shoulders here. Even so, his reasoning was slowly melting away because of Kisa’s seductive voice.

“...Mikado-sama, are you still not done with your work?”

“?!”

Hearing a voice coming from across the bookshelf, both Mikado and Kisa suddenly froze up. After the two of them carefully poked their heads around the corner, Rinka could be seen standing next to the reading table.

“W-Why is Shizukawa-san here...? It should have been only Mikado and I here...?” Kisa’s eyes opened wide.

“When I invited Mikado-sama out on a date after class, he declined, saying he had work for the library committee waiting for him. Wanting to help, I quickly rushed here.”

“You’re not even a member of the library committee! You don’t need to help!”

In response to Kisa’s outburst, Rinka just calmly stated.

“It is my duty as a wife to help my husband. Meaning that it should come as no surprise that I would be waiting here for Mikado-sama.”

“Grrrrr...!” Kisa grit her teeth as she glared at Rinka.

—Really, seems like Kisa is bad with Rinka...

When the three of them were walking around the public park, Kisa was pushed back by Rinka’s attacks. With the overwhelming advantage of being a fiancée, Kisa can’t do much, seeing that she always aims for the opponent’s weaknesses.

“Rinka... thank you... you really saved me there...”

As Mikado showed honest gratitude, Rinka’s cheeks started to burn up.

“N-No, I will do whatever you need me to, so just tell me. I only exist to be of help to Mikado-sama after all.”

“I think that’s a bit much...”

“Of course not. If you were to become an astronaut, unable to return back to earth, I would choose death.”

“Please don’t! Live on and become strong on your own! Or just come with me to space!”

“Is that a proposal?!”

“It is not!”

“That makes sense... There would be no reason to propose to your fiancée after all...” Rinka put one finger on her mouth, contemplating.

Though she might not be on Kisa’s level, she certainly did have a rich brain. Mikado couldn’t help but think that he was surrounded by

‘special’ individuals.

—No, that’s taking it a bit too far, I guess.

He retracted his thoughts and shook his head.

“Yes, in order to support you the best I can, I have prepared some tea. Please let me know if you ever feel tired.”

Taking a step to the side, Rinka revealed a teakettle, a ladle, tea whisk and all the other necessary items to make tea.

“Rather than tea... isn’t this just a full blown tea ceremony?!”

“A rather simple one, yes. If I prepared a charcoal fire, the school’s fire alarm would start, so forgive me, but let me use an induction cooker...”

“You can’t just take drinks and tea into the library, okay?!”

In response, Rinka just flashed a soft smile.

“If it’s for Mikado-sama, everything is allowed.”

“No it’s not!”

“Of course it is. Mikado-sama is an existence close to a god after all.”

“Wait wait wait, I’m just a normal human being, okay?”

Mikado felt happy that Rinka was thinking so highly of him, but even he held reservations about comparing himself to a god.

“This girl is weird, irrational! What’s wrong with her?! Starting a tea ceremony in the library, she’s obstructing us and our work!” Kisa protested, pointing a finger at Rinka.

“Irrational, huh...?”

Mikado couldn’t help but scoff considering that Kisa had previously brought a stun-gun and various other weapons into this very room, obstructing their work as committee members just as much. However, saying that out loud would light another conflict, so he

decided to swallow his words.

Either way, Rinka's arrival was a gust of good fortune for Mikado. He could run away from being alone in this deserted room with Kisa and Kisa herself had no means to truly handle Rinka, at least as of now. As long as Rinka was around, Mikado felt like the poison leaking from Kisa was weakened greatly.

"Rinka... I'm counting on you."

"Y-Yes! I will definitely protect you from the grasp of evil!" She nodded, her face burning bright red.

"...Shizukawa-san, I have something to talk about."

After Rinka hindered her plans of finally capturing Mikado, Kisa went to have a talk with her. Inside an empty classroom in the corner of Sousei Academy, she had her hand on her waist, facing Rinka.

"What might it be? It'd be great if it was enjoyable to talk about."

"As if! As long as you're around, nothing works out the way I want it to be! Let go of Mikado's hand already! If not, something bad will happen to you."

Adopting a threatening tone, she glared at Rinka with her Nanjou Family special skill, 'Eye of Assassination'. However, Rinka just returned a confident smile.

"I apologize, but I will have to decline that request."

Kisa doubted her ears.

"W-What...? Do you even understand what you are saying?! I, the successor of the Nanjou Family, am telling you to, you know?!"

"Be it the Nanjou Family or anybody else, it doesn't matter in this battle of femininity. As rivals in love, I will not let you win."

"W-What do you mean by rivals in love...?"

Rinka tilted her head, slightly confused at Kisa's question.

“I am right, am I not? Nanjou-san has completely fallen for Mikado-sama after all.”

Kisa’s heart was about to leap out of her chest. Her body burned up in less than a second and her cheeks overflowed with heat. She tried her best to hide it, but her voice grew shaky and husky.

“H-Huh?! N-N-N-No way that would happen!”

“No need to try and hide it. If that wasn’t the case, you wouldn’t be so adamant on making me give up on him.”

“Ah...”

Rinka sighed.

“Also, it is clear as day if one just focuses a bit on your gesturing and acting around him. Your affection for him is overflowing with every step you take.”

“E-Ehhhh? That much...?” Kisa put one hand on her cheek, clearly shocked. “I-I wonder if Mikado himself realized...”

“It does not appear to be the case...”

“Thank god... If he really found out, I’d die on the spot...”

To be fair, she was about to die on that very spot already anyway. So embarrassed, unbelievably embarrassed, she wanted to disappear immediately. Even though she had tried her best to hide that loving heart of hers... And, as she was shaking with tears in her eyes, Rinka muttered.

“You might say some scary things, but the truth is...”

“Eh?”

“It frustrates me to say this, but I feel like I can sort of grasp Mikado-sama’s feelings.”

“Mikado’s feelings...?”

“Don’t mind me.” Rinka cleared her throat.

“Don’t give me that! What does Mikado think of me?! Tell me, please!” Kisa grabbed Rinka’s arm as she begged.

“Anyway, I came to this school in order to fight Nanjou-san. I will definitely win against you and win Mikado-sama for myself. I will not... allow myself to run away!”

Her soothing, calming appearance and gesturing didn’t fit her words. Now, she was throwing a stern gaze at Kisa, not stepping down in the slightest.

Inside Sousei Academy’s courtyard, there is a wide dropoff roundabout. At this school, which many girls of wealthy and famous families attended, were a lot of students that didn’t arrive by foot, so building this roundabout was necessary to avoid any excessive traffic jams.

This morning, Mikado stepped out of his own chauffeur car while fixing his necktie, meeting Rinka, who stepped out of a white limousine at the same time. Be it windy or not, no matter the obstacle, her clothes never showed signs of being out of order. Just what you would expect from a student who previously attended Shirase Girls Academy. The word elegance most likely existed because there were girls like her.

“Good morning, Mikado-sama. Being able to meet you this early in the morning, how lucky I am.”

“R-Really...?”

“Yes. I, Shizukawa Rinka, have no regrets anymore.” She showed a laudable smile.

“No, please have something else to live for! Today just started, okay!?”

“Excuse me, but this just shows how happy I am. Being able to walk to school together with Mikado-sama, today will be a good day, no doubt.”

The two of them entered the entrance and it happened when Rinka put one hand on her shoe locker.

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, a threatening sound came from inside the shoe locker.

“Careful!”

“Kya?!”

Grabbing Rinka by the arm, Mikado used his student bag as a shield to protect himself. The sound of an explosion rang out, blowing the shoe locker wide open. Pure white shard-like objects flew towards them, surprising the students around them as well. Following that, a storm of cries and panic ensued... However.

“This is... confetti?”

Grabbing a piece of the mysterious object that hung off his uniform, Mikado tilted his head in confusion. Since the sound was so loud, he had feared for his life, but there were no victims after this incident. That being said, it was still too much for Rinka, as she sunk down onto the floor.

“W-What...was that...? I’m...still alive...?”

“You sure are. Seemed to be some prank taken too far...”

And, Mikado had a certain feeling of *deja vu*. When he was still a little boy, he witnessed a similar explosion like this.

“Anyway, how about you go home for today? It might not be safe until we find out who the prankster is.”

“N-No! I cannot go home just because of this! I finally managed to attend the same school as Mikado-sama, so I cannot back down from just this!”

Brushing off the dust on her skirt, Rinka gallantly stood up. Although she might look feeble and easy to hurt, the girl called Shizukawa Rinka was even more courageous than Mikado expected.

“Just this...Your shoe locker basically exploded, you know?”

“It wasn’t an explosion. It must be a special greeting for me, a transfer student.”

“That sure would be a rough greeting!”

“Maybe they wanted to hold a welcome party, but time didn’t quite fit, so they decided to put small fireworks like this into my shoe locker.”

“Distorted by today’s speedy society! If this was supposed to be a welcome, I would have never guessed.”

“However, I did. This school is filled with kind people after all.”

“You’re way too positive for your own good.” Mikado sighed.

However, once she had decided on it, she would most likely not step down again, so Mikado gave up on persuading her.

“If you feel like something’s wrong, then don’t force yourself. Immediately tell me if you see anything.”

“Yes. I’m counting on you, Mikado-sama!” Rinka leaned against Mikado in a happy manner.

Currently, it was the middle of first period. Sitting between Kisa and Rinka, Mikado felt highly uncomfortable. Two bright jewels, two beauties on both sides, there should be no reason for this feeling of discomfort. However, with sparks flying between the two, Mikado, who was right in the middle of that, certainly couldn’t say that he was not perturbed in the slightest by it.

“Hey... Kisa, focus on class a bit more. It feels like you’re glaring at me.” Unable to bear it any longer, Mikado spoke up towards Kisa.

“Oh my, I’m actually glaring at you though. I wanted to make you receive some mental damage as you fear for your life.”

“Why?! What did I do to you?!”

“You didn’t exactly do anything, but... I know, when you were protecting Shizukawa-san this morning you were acting cool, and I couldn’t forgive that.”

“I wasn’t acting cool, I was trying my hardest to protect her!” Mikado suddenly felt really embarrassed.

But, Kisa only shook her head.

“You’re just thinking that because of your male self-satisfaction. Girls nowadays are able to cut polar bears into 8 parts with their self-defence.”

“That’s not even self-defence anymore, is it?!”

“See! There’s no need to protect Shizukawa-san any more! She is someone able to intercept a missile all by herself!”

“As if someone like that would exist!”

Seeing that Kisa didn’t stop her glaring, Mikado now turned over to Rinka, who was smiling like always.

“Am I not allowed to look?”

“Well... Nothing wrong with that, but not during class, okay?”

“However, Mikado-sama’s appearance during class is such a gallant sight. This truly isn’t the time to study.”

“Of course it is! You’re a student after all!”

“Even more than that, I am Mikado-sama’s woman.”

As Rinka crossed her hands in front of her chest, Kisa slapped her hand on the desk, and shot up.

“How about you stop the wife act? You haven’t even kissed Mikado yet, right!?”

“That’s rich, coming from Nanjou-san, who should be nothing more than a classmate. I don’t think that you have any right to talk back to

Mikado-sama's legal fiancée."

"Huh?! I don't care if you're his fiancée or the president of the United States, I won't allow you to go against my word like that! I am this world's god, you know!?"

"Just how arrogant can you be...? Also, can you two quiet it down already?!"

Mikado tried to butt in between the two girls waging war in the middle of class. At the same time, he saw some light flickering from the roof of the school building across to them. It sent a shiver down his spine, as he felt blood-lust aimed at their location. He could even see someone standing there, but since they were wearing a hood, he couldn't make out their face.

—A sniper?!

Though Mikado didn't know why there would be a sniper at school, but he didn't think too deeply about it, as he just remembered the incident that morning—

"Rinka, roll backwards!"

"Eh?!"

At the same time Mikado raised his voice, Rinka bent her body backwards and a bullet pierced the workbook she had been holding. Mikado followed by supporting Rinka's body as she was about to fall off the chair. Her light and soft body ended up in his arms, hair ruffled chaotically.

"Mikado...sama..." Rinka just gazed up at Mikado.

"H-Hey, what are you doing?! You're trying to hinder a woman's independence again?! She could have just pulled a backflip there!"

Kisa seemed to be angry about something, but there were more pressing matters.

"Eh, what...?"

“What was that sound...?”

“There’s a hole in the workbook...?”

While the classmates were in confusion as to what had just occurred, Mikado grabbed Rinka’s hand and dashed out of the classroom, wary of the windows.

“W-What was that just now?! What is happening?!”

“I don’t know... But, it seems like someone is aiming for you, Rinka. A second time like this can’t be a coincidence.”

“For me?! But...why?!” Rinka went pale.

Looking at the explosive trap in her shoe locker and this sniper aiming for her, there’s no doubt that it’s in some way related to the military. Meaning that Mikado’s utmost priority right now was to get Rinka to safety. That was part of his duty as the successor of the Kitamikado Family, protecting his fiancée at all costs. Taking Rinka with him, Mikado dashed down the hallway. After them was Kokage, with her camera ready at all times.

“T-This might be an unbelievable scoop! The Kitamikado and Shizukawa Family are being targeted?! It must be from aliens! An intergalactic war will break out!”

She blurted out mysterious conclusions that came up in her head, but her ability to sniff out potential scoops was as great as ever. The other students were still left in confusion at the sudden happening, but Kokage immediately deduced the gist of what was going on. Although her conclusion was as crazy as always.

“Wait a second, Mikado-kun! Explain who exactly you are fighting!”

“How would I know?!”

“So it’s not ‘Who’ but ‘What’, huh? Maybe your enemy is some intelligent life form that cannot be explained by ordinary means?!”

“What is that stalker talking about?!”

“I don’t know!”

How would Mikado understand the thought process of the person called stalker by his own fiancée. **Psssssh**, an ominous sound rang out as a cylindrical object came flying through the windows of the hallway, directly into Kokage’s bosom. Because her chest was so well-endowed, it landed right in the opening. On top of that, it had a fuse on it.

“Hyaaaaaa?! Mikado-kun, what should we do about this?!”

Kokage picked up the item and waved it at Mikado.

“Don’t come here! Just throw it outside!”

“But, trash belongs in the trash can! Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Kokage turned around and ran down the hallway in the opposite direction. From a distance, where the reckless cameraman had run off to, a heartfelt “My cameraaaaaaaaaa!” scream rang out.

—Kokage...take care of yourself!

Mikado still had Rinka with him as he dashed down the stairs. Around him, he could hear electronic sounds. Immediately checking his surroundings, he spotted four glowing boxes in the respective corners of the landing. They were small turning cameras connected to bottles by cables. The insides were filled with a pink gas. Assessing the situation, Mikado stopped his feet, stiffening up.

“Don’t move, Rinka... You’ll die.”

“Eh...?”

“As soon as those cameras spot any movement, they’ll explode. Once they explode, that deadly gas will spread.

“Y-You sure are well-informed...”

“I more or less had to learn about it. ‘The successor is always in a constant struggle between life and death’ is the Kitamikado Family’s way of thinking.”

It's a tradition passed down from predecessor to successor, for situations just like these. Concerning the police and military, the Kitamikado Family didn't have absolute trust in them. They would never know when these institutions would eventually bare their fangs against them.

"That's Mikado-sama for you. Having such a dependable husband, I cannot be happier as a wife. I will follow you for the rest of my life!" Rinka put both her hands together as her eyes radiated trust and admiration.

"Well... Before you can do that, we have to get out of this alive, you know?"

"Why is there a need for that? We can just stay here for the rest of our lives."

"Well yeah, but our lives would be over pretty soon at that rate!"

Rinka tilted her head slightly.

"Rather than having other girls steal Mikado-sama away from me, wouldn't it be better to just arrive at our lives' climax right here, right now...?"

"That's scary! Come back to the world of light! I'll gladly listen to all your problems, so come back for now, okay?!"

"You shouldn't underestimate the power of love, Mikado-sama."

There was no villainy clouding Rinka's expression.

"Is that so...?"

Again, Mikado felt happy to receive this much affection from her, but at the same time it sent shivers down his spine. But enough of that, for now he had to focus on getting out of this situation alive. He could call for reinforcements, but the second he moved to get his smartphone out, the explosion would be triggered. At the same time, Rinka was carefully closing in on Mikado even more. Just from looking at her, you wouldn't guess that she was actually moving and the lenses connected to the bomb didn't detect anything either. But

she clearly was closer to him than she was a few seconds ago. She pushed her body against Mikado, making him feel her warmth.

The human body truly is mysterious. Even in the midst of a life-threatening situation like this, as soon as Mikado felt Rinka this close, heat started rising to his head, even if he didn't wish for it. It was just a natural reaction induced by his instincts. A wish to leave something behind in this world, born in the face of death. Not to mention that the other person was a fiancée agreed by both their families and who truly loved him.

However, Mikado had to pull his thoughts away from getting conscious of Rinka and forcefully back onto the problem at hand. In order to find a way to escape this deadlock, he had to find out about the enemy targeting them. Only then might he be able to defuse the danger.

“Rinka, did your family garner someone's resentment or something? Some company you disagreed with, or some suspicious person following you around...?”

“No... not to my knowledge. The Shizukawa Family is just and upright, maintained by honest management, so an incident like this has never happened before. My father is always praised and admired by the people working for him as well.”

“I see...”

Meaning that it couldn't be some outsider. This chain of events had to be Kisa's doing. Looking at this timing, it was probably meant to erase Rinka so that she wouldn't obstruct the love game any longer. It would explain the confetti explosion in the shoe locker this morning. Even if it's the Nanjou Family, ruling from the darkness, just killing off Rinka this easily wasn't an option. She was connected to the Shizukawa Family, with good relations to the Kitamikado Family. It would end in a full out war if they dared to do that.

That sniper shot from before must have to threaten Rinka, meaning that the gas inside these bombs likely isn't deadly either. After all, Kisa couldn't risk getting Mikado killed in the process.

—However...that doesn't mean that Kisa is holding back that much...

Even if it didn't turn out to be toxic gas, it might be hypnotic or paralyzing gas meant to render Mikado powerless, so she could abduct him to Syberia or some other far away land. As he was pondering how to approach the situation, he could hear the sound of footsteps approaching their location.

“Mikado! So you were safe! What was that sniper shot just now?!”

The person that appeared at the landing, completely out of breath, was Kisa. Together with a terrifying electronic sound, the bombs exploded. The bottles opened and the pink gas started to leak out.

“.....! Hold your breath!”

Sounding a short scream, Mikado grabbed Rinka and Kisa and dashed away from the landing. Barely managing to hold his footing as he tripped up the stairs, he succeeded in fixing his posture and collapsed on the hallway floor.

“Haaa...haaa...haaaaa...”

Sweat started dripping from his forehead. He didn't even want to imagine what would have happened if his reaction was a tad bit too late.

“N-Nanjou-san, are you okay?!”

Hearing Rinka's voice, Mikado gazed over at Kisa in panic. Parts of her uniform had melted away and her beautiful skin showed signs of burns.

“.....”

Kisa hugged her own body tightly as she shivered. Fear filled her big, round eyes.

—The enemy isn't Nanjou...?

Mikado was perplexed. He had hoped that he could talk things out with Kisa if she was the perpetrator, but that was too naive. Everyone

could have lost their lives right there. No, Kisa was already in a critical state.

“Kisa! Show me your wounds!”

“Ah...”

Mikado grabbed Kisa by her wrists and inspected her body. No life-threatening wounds could be found. Her burns seemed to not be too deep either, so their traces should disappear after a bit of treatment.

“I-I’m sorry... Because I was careless, I pulled you into great trouble...” Kisa bit on her lip.

“...You’re being weirdly laudable.”

“But, I’ll help out a bit more. I’ll walk ahead through the minefield and clear the way...”

“That’s a bit too admirable!”

“Hey, did you know? The phrase ‘Ladies first’ actually originated from the idea of having women enter a dangerous place with the possible assailant hiding in order to guarantee safety for the men behind her.”

“I know that, but this really isn’t the time for an explanation like that!”

Kisa seemed to have received a heavy shock, rendering her rational thinking nonexistent. At the very least, she wasn’t acting like a normal girl, ready to jump into a minefield of explosions.

—Hm? ‘Normal’ girl...?

Though Mikado had reservations about the phrasing he used, he decided to ignore it and focussed on the problem at hand. First and foremost, he had to guarantee the safety of the two girls in front of him.

“Mikado-sama... What should we do...?”

“Mikado...?”

Both Rinka and Kisa gazed up at Mikado. Both their beautiful pairs of eyes filled with trust and confidence were focussed on him, making Mikado's fighting spirit as a man light up.

“First up is... finding a place with no windows. Out here, we're way too open to attacks.”

“Y-Yes!”

“I'll follow you, Mikado!”

The two girls nodded along.

And, while gazing at Mikado's and Rinka's backs as they ran through the hallway.

“The target is convinced of my innocence. Moving along the mission now.”

The successor of the Nanjou Family who rule the darkness Kisa, muttered into the small microphone at her collar. From the micro speakers inside her ear, a cool and soothing voice resounded.

“Understood. Continuing to attack with pattern B-2.”

It was the commanding officer of the Nanjou Family's private corps. Having her real name erased from historical records when she joined, her code name was Sigma. Although her duty revolved around the entire Nanjou Family, her connection to Kisa herself was the closest.

“Please do. And make sure to not put Mikado in any danger.”

“Basically, put the young Shizukawa girl in as much danger as I want.”

“T-That's not what I meant! Mikado would get really angry at me if he found out!”

Although a proper degree of force was necessary in this operation, Kisa had to lower the risks to a minimum in case it ended in failure.

It'd be more than troublesome if Mikado's affection for her actually suffered, especially during their love game.

"Haaa... Kisa-ojousama..."

One could hear slight irritation from the commanding officer's voice.

"Rather than going through all this trouble of indirectly making him fall for you, wouldn't it be quicker to abduct this shitty Kitamikado brat and confine him, then administer the right medicine to have him go through a brainwashing?"

"I thought about that, but..."

"So you did?!"

"I had a researcher look up the restructuring of one's thinking after brain surgery."

"That's even more nasty than brainwashing! Even I wouldn't go that far!"

"But, well...I...I want Mikado to fall in love with me out of his own free will... It would feel wrong to win the game by constructing his feelings..." Kisa fidgeted as she pushed her fingers against each other.

A short silence ensued, where the commander kept quiet.

".....You idiot!!!"

"Idiot?! You just said idiot, didn't you?! You do realize I will be your future boss, right?!"

"Yes, I sure did! And I'll say it as many times as it takes! Why did you, the successor of the Queen of Darkness, seriously fall for that brat?! Kisa-sama, you deserve to be called an idiot!"

"I-I didn't seriously fall for him or anything like that! I'm just having a game with Mikado, in order to gain his everything, body and mind! Ah, when I say body, it's not in the indecent way. Just normally!"

Kisa's whole body burned up in an instant. She had seriously fallen

for him. She knew just how much she was thinking about Mikado on a daily basis; almost every single minute. But, she couldn't stop it. She wanted Mikado so, so much, she couldn't help it. Rather than logic and reason, one's own feelings play a more important role. That is what it means to be human.

"It's not very convincing if you say it with a beet red face like that."

"Eh?! Are you watching me from somewhere?!"

"From the surveillance cameras of course. You were the one that had us set them up inside the school, remember?"

"D-Don't waste both our time like that and focus on the operation instead! That is an order!"

"Aye aye. Really... I might just be as much of an idiot, I guess."

The connection between the commander was cut and Kisa focussed on cooling down her burning hot cheeks as she chased after Mikado.

Inside the sealed off space of the gym storehouse, the smell of mold was dancing around furiously. Through the dim ray of light entering from the small window, you could see small dust particles meandering through the air.

Having pulled Kisa and Rinka into this isolated location, Mikado focussed on his hearing, listening out for any approaching footsteps. Although it might not look like the best place to hide out in, the danger from the sniper was considerably lower here and they could narrow down the direction of attack to the one entrance. In times like this where there was a severe lack of information, focussing on defence was the best option one had.

Rinka and Kisa sunk down onto the floor, their shoulders heaving up and down as they exhaled tired breaths. They did a full sprint from the school building to the track-and-field ground, so for those two who don't do as much training as Mikado, it must have been tough.

"W-What... are we going to do now?"

Kisa asked, clearly anxious, while Rinka gazed at her smartphone.

“I really would love to call the police, but... I can’t get any reception.”

“Jamming, probably. Well, it’s the right choice on the enemy’s part.”

Mikado also checked his own smartphone. Thinking about the explosion this morning, he had guessed that Rinka was supposed to be the target, but the enemy didn’t stop even if other students ran the danger of being caught in the crossfire. And also, the incident that morning might really have just been a well-intended joke. At the same time he was thinking that, Kisa pulled on the sleeve of his clothes.

“Mikado...I’m...scared. Maybe I can’t make it home again...”

Large round tears built up in the corners of her eyes, as she looked up at Mikado shakily. Normally, Mikado would never get to see such an appearance from the always confident Kisa.

“Ugh...!” Mikado had to put one hand on his chest in order to subdue the stinging pain.

“What is going on?! Did a stray bullet hit you?!” Rinka panicked.

“N-No, it’s nothing...”

Well, it wasn’t exactly nothing. Mikado had received damage of an insane amount. Watching Kisa act this cute, his blood was boiling, completely forgetting about the situation he was in. In order to hide that, he put one hand on Kisa’s shoulder and spoke up.

“...It’ll be fine. I’ll take responsibility and make sure that you two make it home safely. I don’t know who the enemy is, but I will not let them lay a hand on you.”

“...Thank you. I trust you, Mikado. I can only...rely on you.”

Kisa grabbed Mikado’s hand and tightly gripped it.

“Ughhhhhhhhhh?!”

Mikado was seconds away from vomiting blood. If he hadn’t made it

in time and put pressure on his dantian¹, he might have just lost consciousness at Kisa's cuteness. He put one knee on the ground to support his weak body and tried to recover from the shock he just received.

"Mikado-sama?! Are you really fine?!"

"I'm fine... My heart just stopped beating for a second there..."

"You're clearly not fine if you were that close to dying!"

"I can resurrect my heart no matter how many times I have to..."

"That's Mikado-sama for you! You're the coolest person in the entire world!"

Having borrowed Rinka's hand, Mikado slowly stood up, realizing that Kisa was looking at him in a worrisome manner.

"Did I... do something bad...?"

"No...not necessarily."

"Is that so? I was afraid that you were about to collapse from my overflowing charm."

"O-Of course not..."

Cold sweat ran down Mikado's cheek as Kisa hit the bullseye.

"I wouldn't mind if you just honestly told me that I'm so cute that you couldn't help it. I always have the voice recording running at all times."

"I'm very happy to hear that you're back to normal..."

Kisa quickly shook her head at Mikado's statement.

"I-I'm not back to normal or anything... It's true that I'm still scared... I just thought that I might have to get a bit more energetic again..." Kisa's expression grew cloudy again.

Seeing this, Mikado regretted his previous words.

—Yeah, there's no way a girl would be fine during all of this.

Since the other party was Kisa, Mikado couldn't help but think of her as a person that would not be perturbed by this chaos. So much so that he believed she'd actually send a rampaging demon back to hell, but that was probably giving her too much credit.

Right at that moment, a loud sound started ringing from the wall of the storage shed. Following that was intense vibration. A drilling blade appeared from the inside of the wall, paired with the smell of smoke and sparking.

“H-Hey, what is going on...?”

“Mikado-sama...!”

Kisa and Rinka both clung to a respective arm of Mikado.



Although they were clearly in a pinch, he had two flowers on his arms. Mikado couldn't tell if he should be happy or not, really. The wall was now cut open and fell down onto a hurdle, squashing it.

“It’s fine it’s fine. I came here to rescue you. You can believe me.”
Someone’s voice resounded from beyond the cloud of dust rising up.

They were wearing a special-looking suit, presumably able to even cover one’s body from heavy radiation and carrying a violent-looking chainsaw. Heavy breaths resounded from the inside of the gas mask.

“...I really doubt that!”

Mikado went to grab Kisa’s and Rinka’s hands again, and dashed out of the shed. While staying wary of any potential sniper attack, he tried his best to use the other buildings as shielding and moved forward to escape from the school grounds. Then, as he felt the ground beneath his feet shake violently, he jumped back.

“Careful, it’s a trap—”

At the same time he spoke up, a large hole appeared in front of them. Kisa was unable to stop in time like Mikado and was about to fall into the hole as she let out a scream. Luckily, Mikado managed to make it in time to grab her hand. However, the ground he was standing started to loosen as well and because of his bad condition, he had trouble putting more strength into her hand.

“Shit... My hand is slipping...”

Kisa was shaking as Mikado tried his best to get a better hold of her hand.

“I-I’m sorry, I just put olive oil on my hands...”

“Why would you do that?!”

“Ah, no I was putting fresh cream on my hands.”

“Why would you do that?!”

“Who cares about the reason right now!? What’s important is that this is the reason for my hands slipping out of yours! Does me grabbing a piece of caking and eating it sound better then?!”

“Why would you do that?!”

“Hmpf... Just leave me here! I don’t want you to die because of me, Mikado!” Kisa pleaded.

“I will support you, so hurry up!”

Rinka grabbed onto Mikado’s waist. But, Kisa quietly shook her head as a tear ran down her cheek.

“It’s okay... Forget about me! You two just be happy! All that is waiting for me is to be swallowed up by this hole, a sacrifice for your happiness!”

As if it reacting to Kisa’s words, a flash of lightning rang out, followed by a sudden downpour of rain which worsened Mikado’s footing even more. However, he mustered up all his remaining strength and pulled her up in one go, embracing her as they fell backwards.

“M-Mikado... I was scared... So scared...”

“It’s okay now...”

Because of the downpour, Kisa’s clothes got drenched fairly quickly, revealing too much of her bare skin. On top of that, Mikado could directly feel her soft body leaning on his own. Just like a dramatic scene from a movie, he thought to himself.

“Thank you... You are my hero. You looked really cool.”

Not to mention that Kisa gave a dramatic follow-up like that. All that was happening right now should have made Mikado happy as a man. He should definitely not dislike it.

—Hold on a second... Isn’t this a bit weird?

Mikado returned back to reality. It was all too well done. Kisa’s slippery hand, the perfect timing of this downpour and Kisa’s honest words, completely contradicting her normal behaviour. As if... everything until now had just been acting. As he closely inspected Kisa to find any clues for his doubts, he spotted a mysterious device. It was inside her collar, looking oddly akin to a microphone.

—That is?!

Mikado went to avert his gaze, helping Kisa get up. As he acted as if he was looking the other way, he threw a peek back at Kisa, who worked to fix her collar and saw the microphone inside. Basically, it was meant to be inconspicuous. Mikado then continued to gaze up at the sky. Although it was raining just a second ago, there was not a single cloud to be seen in the sky. Following that, he directed his gaze downwards. The only place still drenched was the sports ground, not the courtyard. Observing the situation thus far, his doubts only heightened.

“I feel like I saw something peeking out of your collar just now, what was that?”

“Eh?! Maybe it was just your imagination?!” Kisa’s shoulders shot up.

Quite clearly an excessive reaction.

“No, it hit me when I pulled you up from the hole. Let me take a quick glance.”

“Why would I?! It’s my privacy! It was probably just my collarbone!”

“Do you have such a thick collarbone, Nanjou-san...?” Rinka seemed a bit perplexed.

“Yes, it is! So thick you could live off it!”

“How is one able to eat a collarbone?”

“I won’t forgive you if you make fun of collarbones! Humanity’s history is built upon collarbones after all!”

At this point, she had become completely incoherent. She separated herself even further from Mikado, not letting him catch a single glimpse of her collar anymore, as suspicious as one could be.

—I see...

Mikado had started to see through Kisa’s actions. Most likely... every single incident today was her doing. While trying to directly drive

away Rinka from Sousei Academy, she meant to raise her own femininity during these incidents in order to heighten Mikado's affection for her. That would mean that a deadly trap would not be plausible.

Deducing that, Mikado gazed down the hole in the ground and spotted something that looked like cushions at the bottom. That only supported Mikado's assumption. Everything was made to guarantee Kisa's safety.

"Hey, Kisa..."

"...What?"

Mikado decided to ask her about it and Kisa must have realized his true intentions, as she took a short break in her response there. Her drenched hair and jumbled up uniform was seductive and her glaring eyes were as captivating to look at as ever.

"No... Nothing." Mikado shook his head.

He rethought his actions. Rather than ending today's game by stating he had seen through her, it might be better to play along and wait for a chance to counterattack. Her plan consisted of inducing situations where he would have to protect her, tickling his masculinity to make him fall for her as she showed how charming she was. However, that must also mean that if he managed to protect her, he could make her heart skip a beat if he looked gallant enough doing it. A double-edged sword in the truest sense.

"For now, let's go back to the school building. The two of you will catch a cold at this rate."

"To the school building...?" Kisa tilted her head, visibly confused.

"Wouldn't it be better to run away from this place immediately...?" Rinka turned her eyes toward the gates.

"No, recklessly moving in a situation like this will only bring more danger. If we can't get any reception, it might be better to call for help in the teacher's office. If it's in school grounds, we should have the upper hand."

In order to prevent Kisa escaping from this playing field, Mikado wasn't entirely truthful.

"I see... As expected it's just as Mikado-sama says." The thoroughly Yamato Nadeshiko Rinka agreed with Mikado.

"Are you stupid? If you have time to worry about a cold, then just run away!"

As usual, Kisa showed no signs of being honest.

—Why are you obstructing me now?! It'll be harder for you to trap me outside the school, right?!

Mikado really wanted to retort then and there, but that would make it too obvious that he had seen through everything.

"Let's go. This is our chance now that the enemy's attacks have stopped."

Taking Kisa and Rinka with him, Mikado made his way towards the school building. Immediately after entering, they quickly swapped to their indoor shoes and went up the stairs, onwards to the teacher's office. However, what greeted them was darkness and silence, there was no sign of human life on the other side. As Mikado carefully opened the door to check, they were greeted by empty desks.

"The teachers...are all absent it seems..."

Rinka's head poked forwards as she hid behind Mikado's back, like she was afraid that something might jump at her.

"I-I wonder why... Normally at least one of them would be here..."

Kisa acted the innocent bird, but she must have had a hand in this, no doubt about it. This probably meant that there could be another trap laid in this very room, or Kisa herself would launch an attack in one way or another. Meaning that Mikado had to be extremely wary.

"...Don't move away from me. If it comes down to it, I'll use myself as a shield to protect you two."

Mikado carefully set foot inside the room, taking a defensive position.

“Y-Yes! I will never let go of you!” Rinka snuggled up to Mikado.

“W-What’s with you, trying to sound so cool!? Don’t think this would have any impact on a girl like me!”

Or so Kisa complained, but her face was colored in a burning red color. She seemed to have received a good amount of damage there. However...

“Just... don’t force yourself. I wouldn’t know what to do anymore if you died, Mikado...” She whispered, as she grabbed hold of Mikado’s sleeve.

She didn’t use her entire hand for it, but instead made do with just her fingers. Not to mention that she her head was tilted downwards as her eyes gazed up towards Mikado.

“Ugh...Ah...Ahhhhhh...”

Receiving crazy amounts of damage to his luckily still beating heart, Mikado couldn’t hold back an agonizing groan.

“Mikado-sama?! What happened?! Are you not feeling well after all?!”

“No no...I’m totally fine...I’ve never been better...”

The problem was with his heart, not body. Even if he knew that it was all just calculated actions on Kisa’s part, his thoughts and feelings were another matter. This cuteness of Kisa’s that he normally didn’t get to see greatly hammered away at his defence, no matter how much he mentally steeled himself. Not to mention her confident ‘Hmpf, see how cute I am!’ gaze afterwards was equally adorable. Well, since it came from the person Mikado fell for, everything she did looked cute, no matter what it was.

—This really is a disadvantageous playing field... But, as the successor of the Kitamikado Family, I cannot back down from this!

Mikado tightened his cheeks into a sterner gaze as he moved deeper

into the teacher's office. As he gazed at their surroundings the two girls remained close to him. Since he could not guess what might happen (more accurately, what Kisa had planned), Mikado couldn't allow himself to relax. And then, he heard a mysterious sound coming from beneath a desk.

"Kyaaaaaa?!" Kisa screamed as she clung to Mikado's arm.

Well, she most likely wasn't actually scared, but her acting was on-point. As a result of this, her well-endowed chest was pressed against Mikado's arm. That alone was close to tearing down all his hard work in steeling his mind.

"3.1415926535897932384626433832795."

"Mikado-sama?! This clearly isn't the time for maths!"

"It just helps me relieve some stress when I recite some mathematical numbers."

Mikado forced all his brain power away from this dangerously soft feeling on his arm and onwards to math problems inside his head. If he didn't, he would be sucked in by the seemingly endless softness surrounding his arm.

"I-Is that so...? Um, if you really feel stressed, feel free to hit me whenever you see fit..."

"How would that help?! I'd actually feel worse!"

"Then go ahead and scold me however much you want! If it makes you feel better, I will accept it no matter how harsh your words may be! Wounds inflicted by a person you love are sweeter than sweets after all!"

"I don't get that level of sweetness!"

"I'm sure it will get me excited!"

"Isn't that even worse?!"

Though Mikado could sort of grasp where she was coming from,

Rinka's argument still largely remained a mystery to him. At the same time, Kisa launched another attack at Mikado while he had his guard down.

"M-Mikado... Someone is there... I-I might just actually die here... I don't want that..." She made her long eyelashes shake as she looked up at Mikado.

—This is just acting! This is just acting! This is just acting!!!

Mikado screamed out inside his heart several times. Regaining the reasoning he was about to lose, he prepared a cool-sounding phrase for a counterattack.

"I won't let you die. At the very least I will get out of this alive, Kisa."

"U-Um... What about me...?" Rinka spoke up, clearly feeling left out.

"I'm sorry, but I can't help you. If it comes down to it, please die with me."

"Understood!"

"You're fine with that?!"

"Ah, but... I really can't die if I don't have at least a hundred children with Mikado-sama first!"

"That's not going to work out! One of us will die in the meantime, I tell you!"

However, Rinka just ignored Mikado's retort as she put both her hands together in front of her chest.

"You can do it, I believe in you!"

"I'm not going to!"

Mikado knew that this was just Rinka's way of showing kindness and support, but he couldn't risk heightening her affection for him any more. The only person he should have to worry about right now is Kisa. However, what Kisa said was...

“What does it matter...? We’re all going to die here... All that’s waiting for us is hell... Nobody will save us...”

She blurted out horror movie phrases without taking breaths as she sunk down onto the floor.

—Is this the development you were hoping for?! At least use this situation you induced yourself to your advantage!

Mikado was starting to get a bit fed-up with Kisa’s actions.

“Anyway... We have to see if someone is actually hiding here.”

“Yes! I will follow you even to the next world!”

At this point, Rinka was mostly keen on dying either way. Mikado covered Rinka with his back and slowly moved towards the desk that had made that sound before. Since this was all Kisa’s plan, he didn’t have to worry about her, but in case the one in a million chance came about, he had to protect Rinka. At the same time, something appeared from beneath the desk. It was a cat, a typical American short-hair type.

“...A cat, huh?”

“What is a cat doing in the teacher’s office?!”

“Maybe a teacher picked her up after she got abandoned?”

“Her fur looks more like a cat used in TV commercials...”

“W-What if she got abandoned after her TV job was done?”

“That’s way too cruel! I would love to see the face of a person who would do that!”

“I’d say they might look pretty cute...”

“They might, but they’re a demon on the inside!”

“Probably...”

Rinka showed clear resentment, but since Mikado knew whose plan it

was, he could not take her seriously. Instead he went to grab the cat, careful not to get bitten and safely took her out of the teacher's office.

A bit further away from Mikado and Rinka, stood Kisa, mumbling into her microphone again as she watched over them.

"N-No more... I might be done for..."

"Did you hurt yourself?!" Sigma's voice resounded through the earphone.

"That's not it... Mikado is...way too cool! What should I do about this?!"

"Don't ask me!"

Sigma started to seriously get fed up with Kisa's act.

"Apparently, he really wants me to stay alive! He would protect me at the cost of his own life! He's way too cool, isn't he?! He's a total hero, right?!"

"I don't care!"

"And his gaze as he said 'Please die together with me' was so unbelievably sexy... Ah, well, he said that towards Shizukawa-san, so I can't forgive that, but it was still great... ehehehe."

"I keep telling you to stop asking me!"

"Just hear me out! It's necessary for me to say these things out loud or else I'll go crazy!" Kisa ordered.

"Listen here you...can you keep this nonsense for when you get home? I'm sure that Mizuki will gladly hear you out."

"No can do. Recently it's been so much that she locks herself up in her own room for five hours at a time."

"And that comes as no surprise! I'm already fed up after one minute!" She screamed from the bottom of her heart.

In response, Kisa let out a pensive sigh.

“At this rate, my mind won’t last. I will lose the love game, Mizuki will succeed the Nanjou Family as its new head and you will lose your job... You’ll end up as an old lady at the register of a supermarket...then your husband will get angry at you in your four and a half tatami sized room... So you then proceed to lose yourself as a woman... Finally, an old classmate of yours who you often played around with when you were younger will appear...”

“Can you not give me dark future prospects like that?”

“What I’m trying to say is that I have to win no matter what.”

Kisa muttered, watching Mikado as he helped the cat escape safely.

“...Today will be our last great battle.”

“We’re really doing this, huh?”

There’s no turning back now, is what Sigma tried to say.

“Yes, please help me out.” Kisa nodded along in full force.

After the cat had dashed down the hallway, it happened when he stood a bit further away from the door. Suddenly, the shutters of the windows and doors closed, submerging the hall in complete darkness. Both Kisa and Rinka let out shrieks. Since shutters shouldn’t exist in a place like this, their sudden appearance left them in shock. Although it was all a part of Kisa’s plan, Mikado seriously wondered if there was a need to modify the school to such an extent.

In the midst of this darkness, a single PC monitor suddenly lit up. Shown on the screen was a masked individual, wearing an ammunition belt wrapped around their body, they were equipped with two machine guns. Behind them was a military banner.

Very suspicious. So suspicious and random that it was lacking in any sort of persuasive power.

“T-This is... Some sort of armed group?!”

However, Rinka just earnestly showed shock and surprise. In response to that, a rough laugh resounded from across the screen.

“Ku ku ku... Now I’ve got you. You’re perfectly trapped in that room now.”

“Trapped...? What are you talking about?” Rinka asked as she snuggled up to Mikado.

“After ten minutes, we will release starving beasts into that room.”

“Beasts...? W-What kind of animals are we talking about...?”

“Cats.”

“A cat?! That doesn’t sound too threatening though...”

Yet another laugh resounded from the screen.

“It’s not just your average cat. Actually, it’s 101 cats. Not to mention that they have heightened aggressiveness and fighting strength, and we left them to starve so they would get even more assertive— They are trained cats.”

“Trained...cats?!?”

“In ten minutes, you three will be swarmed by these cats, and die. The last things you will feel are their paws and rough tongues!”

“How scary!” Kisa exclaimed.

—The only thing scary here is your weird choices!!!

Mikado could barely hold himself back from retorting. Also, dying by being swarmed with cats was actually a reward for many cat lovers. Seriousness and a sense of terror was clearly lacking here. However, Kisa and Rinka were shaking.

“So this is how the bloodline of the Shizukawa Family will end... Ending up as cat food...”

“I at least would have preferred to end up as dog food!”

“You should hate ending up as food either way!”

Kisa just shook her head in response.

“No no, every life on this earth holds the same value... Ending up as the food of a living being higher up on the food chain decides the rank of the one being eaten.”

“Um, how about not getting eaten in the first place?”

“Don’t think that we’ll always remain at the top of the pyramid... Even humans can get eaten...”

Out of nowhere, Kisa had a flashlight in hand and she used it to create a scary atmosphere by shining it onto her face from beneath her chin.

—You actually want a horror development?!

Although it was the person he fell for, Mikado started to think he knew Kisa less than he had actually hoped he did. Well, not being that easy to grasp was actually one of her most charming points. Meanwhile, the person across the screen spoke up again.

“We locked up the teacher’s office. If you don’t want to end up as cat food, then you better listen to our orders.”

“What should we do...?”

Since the person across the screen must be some sort of employee of the Nanjou Family, Mikado started getting a really bad feeling about what might be coming next. Most likely some crazy and over the top order.

“If you want to escape from that room, two people will have to kiss.”

“An escape room where you have to kiss someone to leave...?!”

Unconsciously, Mikado gazed over at Kisa’s lips. Kisa put the palm of her hand on her lips and quickly averted her gaze. Her earlobes were slightly flushed.

“J-Just what kind of meaning is there to such a condition...? What benefit is there for an armed group like yours...?”

Rinka brought forth a justified question. Mikado was about to lose his logical thinking for a second there because of the sudden appearance of the word ‘kiss’, but he quickly regained his senses. In return, the cloth that hid the person’s face slightly shook as they laughed.

“You see, we really love forcing people play along with our orders and watching them struggle. And now, all your embarrassment, jealousy, conflicts and affection...they all will be used to entertain us... Ku ku...”

The armed person on the screen was acting like the villain of some hero show. Although it might look idiotic, the way they were locked up, letting down one’s guard could still end painfully. Depending on the choice of the person to kiss, as well as the way of choosing said person, it could end up as a representation of affection. A single careless move could mean the end of Mikado. Maybe not physically life-threatening as such, but his life might very well end here. In silence, Mikado gazed between the two girls.

“I understand. Mikado-sama, if you would.”

Rinka pushed her body towards Mikado, closing her eyes.

“H-Hold on! This is clearly wrong! Mikado should be the one to decide, right?!” Kisa quickly protested.

Her reaction speed was actually nothing slower than a millisecond.



“No, this isn’t the place for choices. There is no problem with fiances like us kissing, and the faster we do it, the quicker we can leave.”

“I-It’s a problem of Mikado’s opinion, right?!”

“You’re saying that Mikado-sama would choose Nanjou-san over me...?”

Rinka tilted her head dubiously, to which Kisa lifted her chin in an elegant manner.

“W-We won’t know for sure! But, if he’s forced to kiss someone, at least let him kiss the one he likes, otherwise you’d feel bad for him, right?!”

—There it is.

Now that Kisa had said ‘Kiss who he likes’, deciding, as a whole, will become much more dangerous. There are bound to be microphones and cameras set up in this room, so if Mikado made a wrong move, he would lose the game. He would end up as the slave of the Nanjou Family and Japan would be submerged in darkness.

“Hey, Mikado...?”

Kisa showed a bewitching smile as she closed in on Mikado.

“If you could choose, you’d definitely want to kiss me, right? My lips are really... really soft, you know?”

Her lips looked plump and juicy like a fruit. It seemed she had even put on some lip gloss as they were radiating a strong pink colour. Putting her index finger on said irresistible lips, Kisa looked up at Mikado. From this position, both her well-endowed chest as well as her sweet fragrance toyed with his reasoning.

—Of course I want to kiss you!

Mikado wanted to scream that out loud. For him, he wanted to kiss her even without this whole escape room dilemma. He wanted to kiss her so that she’d be surprised and start to get teary-eyed. However, defeat was not allowed for the successor of the Kitamikado Family.

—If deciding between the two is too dangerous, then...!

Mikado had already arrived at a conclusion that would save him.

“You know... Wouldn’t you two kissing solve everything?”

“Eh?!” “Huh?!”

The girls’ eyes went round.

“There was no specification that the kiss had to happen between a boy and a girl, right? Then why don’t you just kiss each other? It won’t ruin our relationships as much as the other choices would, right?”

“Of course it will! Our relationship will be awkward for at least three years!”

“A lot happens in life.”

“I don’t want a lot to happen! I don’t have any interest in girls!” Kisa tried her hardest to protest.

It was an expected reaction, but she was making it a bit too obvious. At the same time, Rinka softly put her hand on Kisa’s shoulder.

“Eh, w-what are you doing?!”

“It’s Mikado-sama’s order... I can’t help it... All I can do is close off my heart and get it over with...” Rinka smiled, but her eyes were dead.

“Are you willing to do anything just because Mikado ordered you to?!”

“Naturally. If Mikado-sama were to wish for it, I would even kiss a crocodile.”

“I’m not a crocodile though!”

“The level of danger is pretty much the same. I fear that you will bite my lips off when I kiss you.”

“Then don’t come any closer!”

Kisa tried to distance herself, but Rinka didn’t stop that easily.

“Now, prepare yourself, Nanjou-san...”

“I-Is this really fine, Mikado?! It’s my first kiss, you know?!”

Kisa threw a gaze begging for help over at Mikado.

“What’s the problem with that?”

“You know, a first kiss should be a bit more...well...” Her face turned as red as an apple.

Seeing her expression filled with despair and embarrassment, Mikado could feel something tickle inside his chest. Though he really wanted to take that into consideration, he couldn’t allow it. He had planned for this, using Kisa’s prepared stage to launch a complete counterattack.

“If you really don’t want your first kiss to be with a girl...then I wouldn’t mind helping out.” Mikado softly grabbed Kisa’s pointed chin, and softly muttered.

“Ah...”

Kisa’s eyes grew even more watery. Her white throat gulped heavily and her lips were shaking, as if she was considering it for real.

“Mikado-sama, you can’t! I will become the victim in your stead!” Rinka appealed.

“No, it’s fine. Forcing her would make me feel just as bad as those terrorists, so I will let her decide. Kisa, what do you want?”

“I-It’s not like, a thing of me wanting it, it’s just that I don’t want to do it with a girl, and there’s no other choice besides that, it’s like a force I can’t do anything against!” Kisa panicked.

With this, Mikado succeeded in carefully pushing the difficult choice onto Kisa. The vector of attack changed in a matter of seconds. All he had to do was push her until she couldn’t defend anymore. Closing their distance even further and now being able to feel each other’s warmth, Mikado whispered directly into Kisa’s ears.

“So basically... You want to kiss me, right?”

“————!!”

Kisa jumped away from Mikado. Her ears, her neck, her face, even her palms were burning red. Even her breathing turned rough.

“Ahhh, forget about it! Enough for today! I’m going home!”

At the same time she screamed out those words, the shutters of the window and door suddenly opened. With a loud bang, the teacher’s office was illuminated. Now that the obstacle were lifted, Kisa dashed out of the room, only to quickly return shortly after.

“D-Don’t think that you’ve won with this, okay?! Y-Y-Y-You better remember this!” She left those words behind, as she really ran away this time.

—Are you some old school villain?!

Mikado retorted inside his heart, but he didn’t actually mind it that much, since this kind of Kisa was just as cute. Even though he managed to stand victorious, he felt his own heart receive considerably large damage as well. The computer screen with the mysterious person had already turned off.

“...Why did they let us go, I wonder?”

Now that peace returned to the teacher’s office, Rinka tilted her head in confusion.

In the end, classes resumed like nothing had happened, without any armed force or terrorist group attacking the school. Kisa didn’t even dare to make eye contact with Mikado. Her ears were still red and she just rested her body on the desk. She must have received a lot of damage as well.

However, since she hadn’t planned any other weird traps, Mikado decided to let it rest. Instead, he aimed for an opening when the teacher was writing something on the blackboard and moved his body over towards Kisa.

“This ‘Escape room based on kissing someone’ was your idea, right?”

“Wha...?!” Kisa’s upper body shot up.

After checking again that the teacher hadn’t caught on, Kisa spoke up.

“W-Wait, when did you catch on?!”

“About what?”

“Don’t play dumb, okay?! You just said that it was my idea, right?!”

“Well, it was obvious from the very beginning.”

“Ugh...!”

Mikado simply shrugged his shoulders as Kisa rammed her fist on the desk. Even so, the teacher didn’t turn around. It probably meant that the teacher didn’t care much about the students listening or just not about being a teacher in general. Either way, Mikado shook his head at Kisa in disbelief.

“I’m a bit surprised. Just so that you could kiss me, you went to prepare all of that. Do you want to kiss me that badly?”

“Y-Y-Y-Y-You’re wrong! No, what are you talking about?! It was all to win in the game, of course!” She didn’t even try to hide her panic.

Her hair was a mess from all the heavy gesturing and she kept frantically waving her hands around. Mikado found himself wanting to see more of that, so he brought out the teasing side of himself.

“But, you didn’t really look like you hated it when I approached you about it?”

“Huh?! Of course I did! Just like I’d hate it when a cat’s paw pokes me in my cheek!”

“You hate something like that?”

Kisa frantically nodded along.

“I-I do! I hated it so much that I was about to let that thing I hid in the teacher’s office go off!”

“Wait, what are we talking about here? You better have defused that already, okay?!”

“Of course I did. As if I would make a blunder like—”

It happened when Kisa started to boast. From far away, a dull explosion rang out, followed by a slight vibration.

“...An earthquake, huh?”

“It was clearly the thing you prepared, right?!”

“An earthquake at Sousei Academy’s teacher’s office.”

“I’ve never heard of an earthquake being limited to such a small area!”

“It’s fine, the explosion is something akin to a firework. The main event would have been the 101 cats...”

“I really hope that none of the teacher’s have a cat allergy...”

Imagining the teacher’s office turning into a heavenly hell, Mikado voiced a small prayer.

1 Focus point for internal meditative techniques, lower point of the navel

Chapter 2: Virtue-lacking Mizuki

~On a certain day, a line conversation between Mizuki and Mikado~

“Huhu~ Good morning, Mikado-kun!”

“What do you mean morning? It’s late at night. Can you stop sending me a line message every day before going to bed? Things will get troublesome if your older sister finds out.”

“Onee-chan already realized a long time ago though. She was trying really hard to delete my account while I was taking a bath, you know?”

“So she knows?!”

“Yeah! She stole my smartphone and tried to crack my password, so I switched to fingerprint recognition, and then she put sleeping medicine in my juice to try and unlock my phone with my finger!”

“What is this, a spy movie...?”

“But, since the fingerprints don’t come from me, but from a morgue, she couldn’t unlock it~”

“I did not see that. I will erase this message from my memories.”

“Ahahah, from a morgue, see!”

“Don’t repeat it! I don’t want to hear any more scary Nanjou stories!”

“And then, she put some metal shavings on the screen to reconstruct my fingerprints and was about to unlock it with that!”

“Just what kind of war are you sisters waging in your own home...?”

“Since I was about to lose there, I started taking my smartphone with me to the bath.”

“Don’t tell me...”

“Exactly~ Right now, I’m in the bath! Wanna do a video call?”

“As if!”

“Ehhh? No need to be flustered like that~ Mikado-kun and I are good buddies now, aren’t we? Look, I even have a mole in the same spot as Onee-chan~”

“I didn’t need that information!”

“Really? I’m telling you, there’re lots of benefits to being my buddy~ You’ll get super secret information about her, like her weaknesses that only her little sister would know~”

“Please, I’d love to be your friend!”

“That was way too quick, ahaha! Then then, join me on my shopping trip next time! If you help me carry my stuff, I’ll tell you something!”

“Shopping trip...? Just the two of us?”

“It’s fine, isn’t it~? If Mikado-kun gets married to Onee-chan, this sort of thing will happen more frequently, right? I’ll be your future sister-in-law, right?”

“Well... you’re not wrong...”

“Mikado-kun, you know those proverbs like ‘If you want to shoot the general, first shoot his horse’ or ‘You can’t solve a problem without making some sacrifice’, right?”

“Yeah, that makes sense.”

“Well, I don’t really get that complicated stuff.”

“You used them perfectly though?!”

“You know, I’m a bit lost in the head, but a genius at the same time!”

“For some reason, that contradiction makes perfect sense.”

“Then then, let’s meet up in front of the owl at the train station next saturday, 8am! I’ll dress up just for you, okay?”

“You don’t have to.”

“Ehh, I will though. Anyway, I wanna discuss in detail where we’re going, so let’s have a video call!”

“Why are you so keen on having a video call while being butt-naked?!”

Her little sister was in a strangely good mood. Well, Kisa’s little sister Mizuki, who’s always been treated as an idiot in the Nanjou Family, was always in a good mood, but that night it was surpassing the normal parameters. As Kisa walked past Mizuki’s room in the hallway, she took a quick peek inside and spotted her little sister right in the middle of a fashion show. On the floor, the bed and the desk, there were clothes scattered everywhere. Meanwhile Mizuki herself was striking poses in front of the mirror. She was making a peace-sign gesture, putting her hand on her hip and crouching down on the floor to look up at the camera she had in her hand, taking selfies. She would even let out muffled “Nihehe” laughs, as she gazed at the pictures she had taken. Clearly suspicious. So much so that this feeling of suspicion leaked out into the hallway.

“Mizuki...? What are you doing...?”

When Kisa couldn’t hold back her curiosity and asked, Mizuki turned around towards her holding a white one-piece.

“Ah, Onee-chan! Hey, do you think this one-piece fits me?”

“I really don’t think that prim and proper fits you all too well... No, I’m the one questioning you right now!”

“Ehhh? I’m not really doing anything. I’m just going out soon, all alone~” Mizuki said, as she put perfume on her wrist, testing the odor.

“That has to be a lie! You’re clearly dressing up! And that perfume belongs to me! Why do you have that, Mizuki?!”

“No, it’s mine. I just bought the same one as Onee-chan’s~”

“What reason is there to buy the same one...?!”

Since Mizuki even put on a similar style of makeup, Kisa couldn’t help but feel that something was off. With her face looking very close to her own, she felt like she had a miniature self standing in front of her.

“Ehehe~ There’s no reason or anything~ If I had to say one, it’s because I love my kind Onee-chan, I guess?”

“That’s gotta be a lie!”

“It’s not! Really, I love Onee-chan so much that I’d love to give you a french kiss in the middle of the night! A deep one!”

“Please tell me that’s a lie!”

“The lock screen on my phone is a picture of the back of Onee-chan’s legs! So sexy, I tell you!”

“That’s making me more than just uncomfortable! Please, tell me you’re lying!”

“It was all a lie~”

When Kisa started to get teary-eyed, Mizuki just poked her tongue out in a childish manner. After that, she dodged Kisa’s attack, jumped on the bed, stripped off everything she was wearing and put on the white one-piece. Although Kisa was relieved that it had all been a farce, she couldn’t quite relax either.

“So, who are you meeting? It’s not a boy, right?”

Honestly, she was suspicious that it might actually be Mikado, but was too scared to directly ask her. After all, even Kisa hadn’t gone on a date with Mikado yet. Meanwhile, Mizuki put one finger on her adorable lips.

“And and, it’s clearly not related to anything but, which underwear do you think is the cutest? It has to be one that would be okay to be

seen when I get pushed down, right?”

“It clearly is related! And it’s totally a boy, right?! Who is it?! Confess!”

“Wait! If you swing me around too much, you’ll rip my head off! Please let me live a bit longer!”

Kisa was shaking Mizuki’s shoulders back and forth, completely enraptured by the desire to find out, but Mizuki never confessed.

Saturday, in front of the train station, the place was filled with people waiting for each other. Near the exit of the underground passage stood a large owl statue, stylishly-clothed boys and girls dotted about. The ones fidgeting with their phones, the ones fixing their hair as well as those that were adjusting their clothes, several of these people had gathered here. And, many of the groups meeting up consisted of a boy and a girl. As soon as they spotted each other’s face, they would enter their own world, walking away quickly.

—I really hate this atmosphere...

Mikado felt uncomfortable in the midst of that. Because of the ban on romance from the Kitamikado Family, Mikado never had experienced this sort of thing, so being present in this pink and rosy atmosphere felt like he was in a different country. On top of that, he couldn’t help but think how fun it would be if he was actually meeting up with Kisa.

“Waaah! Mikado-kun, you actually came!”

He heard an energetic voice as he spotted Mizuki dashing down the stairs. No, rather she jumped down. Wearing a sport t-shirt in a bare midriff-style, and shorts, she gave off a bright atmosphere. The multi-layered bracelet on her arm, looking slightly out of place, only added to her a cuteness. Her slim shoulders peeking out from her clothes and her slender waist gave a weird sense of translucency. Although she was younger, a certain feeling of beauty accompanied her, making the people around the girl noisier. She jumped up and down, greeting Mikado with both her arms open.

“I didn’t think you’d come from there. I expected it to be from the ticket gate.”

“Yeah, I was so excited that I came here an hour early and since I was bored, I was looking at the nearby shops, and found some cute accessories~ Sorry for being late?”

“No, no problem. You’re still five minutes early.”

Mikado thought she was rather lax and uncoordinated, but she unexpectedly seemed to be conscious about her time schedule.

“So, what are we going to buy? Some consumer electronics?”

“...Consumer electronics?” Mizuki was puzzled.

“Like a rice cooker, a vacuum cleaner, or some other heavy stuff, right? You said you needed me to carry things.”

“A middle school girl like me isn’t going to buy a rice cooker on her day off like this!”

Mikado narrowed his eyebrows.

“So you won’t... What other heavy goods are there... A barbell?”

“Even less so! I’ll get muscles because of that!”

“Muscles are always helpful. If for some reason the electronics in this world happen to get destroyed because of a violent explosion, humanity’s last fortification will be muscles!”

“I don’t want that kind of fortress!”

A complete and utter denial. Then why am I even here? Mikado wondered to himself. His common idea of carrying luggage and packages started to crumble away. Mizuki shrugged her shoulders.

“For crying out loud, Mikado-kun, you don’t understand anything about girls~ I’ll teach you lots today.”

“That’d be great.”

Mikado himself was aware of his lack of knowledge about the opposite sex, and if he managed to make Kisa's little sister his ally, it would give him an incredible advantage in the love game.

"Then then, for now, I want to walk around the stores in front of the train station!"

"Understood. By the way, the human skeleton can only handle a weight of around 500 kg before it gets crushed, so keep that in mind when shopping."

"I won't buy that much! Anyway, let's go, Mikado-kun~"

Mizuki clung to Mikado's arm, pulling him along as she went up the stairs. Jumping up two stairs at once made her cute like a rabbit.

"H-Hey... Don't cling to me that much."

"It's fine~ I'm your future 'little sister' after all! Linking arms with Onii-chan is perfectly fine, right?"

"But..."

"Ohhh? Don't tell me, Mikado-kun, you don't see me as a little sister? You're being conscious of me~?"

Fufu, Mizuki laughed to herself as she put one hand in front of her mouth. Mikado could feel his ears getting hotter.

"I'm not. My enemy in the game is Kisa, and Kisa only."

"I wonder~? Hey Mikado-kun, did you realize? Today I put on the same perfume as Onee-chan~"

Mizuki bent her neck back and forth loosely as she rubbed it against Mikado, revealing her white throat. A sweet fragrance reached up to him, paired with her comforting warmth.

"Ugh..." Mikado winced.

"A nice smell, right? No need to hold back, just sniff me all you want!"

“As if I would!”

“Unlike Onee-chan, nothing bad will happen if you do! Come on, our genes and face are mostly the same, so you can just sniff me if you ever feel the need to sniff Onee-chan~” Mizuki nuzzled up to Mikado like a cat.

This was bad. Mizuki really resembled Kisa a tick too much. By putting on the same perfume, putting on a similar style of makeup and changing her atmosphere a bit more... Naturally, Mikado's instincts would react to the stimulation. Of course, Mikado liked Kisa's personality first and foremost, but her outer appearance was completely in his strike zone. That's why, even if he understood that the other person wasn't Kisa, he couldn't stop his heartbeat from getting faster.

“A-Alright! Today, your older brother will buy you anything you want! Just let me know!”

Hence, he escaped by using the older brother position.

“Ehhh? You don't have to buy me anything, I'm just looking around~”

“...Just looking around?”

“Yeah! Ah, look at that blouse over there, isn't it cute?!”

Past the window of the store Mizuki ran off to, a fluorescent green blouse so radiant that it almost hurt one's eyes, was displayed. Not to mention that aliens were printed on it in great number, hurting Mikado's eyes even further. Above that, the design of the aliens looked rather realistic.

“...It really isn't cute.”

“Ehhh? It totally is~ Like crazy! Look, look, there's even an illustration of an alien eating an earthling!”

“All the cuteness is gone as soon as humans being eaten are

involved!”

“But their way of eating looks cute! Like a hamster!”

“A hamster eating a human doesn’t make it any cuter!”

“I see, so Mikado-kun belongs to those who don’t want to be eaten by a hamster~”

“A faction like that exists...?”

Mikado was yet again thrown into chaos after finding out a girl’s taste. On top of that, Mikado couldn’t even tell if Mizuki belonged to the regular or irregular type. And, this question was left unanswered, as the girl let out a satisfied sigh.

“Alright, onwards to the next store!”

“You’re not going to buy it?! You kept saying that it was cute, right?”

Mizuki blinked her eyes in confusion.

“I won’t? Illustrations of a human getting eaten by an alien are pretty unpleasant after all... I’d be a bit perplexed seeing someone wear that...”

“After saying that it was cute that much?!” Mikado was working his hardest so that he wouldn’t be left behind by a girl’s weird sense of values.

“What I want to do is window shopping. I did tell you I was just going to walk around.”

“Then why did you even invite me...?”

“To save the world!”

“When did this turn into such a big deal?! ”

There were no signs of the world being close to ruin at all in the town. All that was in Mikado’s sight were couples or groups of students, living their normal everyday life, no signs of war. However,

Mizuki just hummed to herself, clinging to Mikado's arm yet again as she started walking.

Having come to the conclusion that, as long as he didn't resist that too much (if he did, Mizuki would cling to his arm even more fiercely), she would just stay like this, Mikado went docile and walked next to her. Although the other person was a middle schooler, she still looked exactly like Kisa. If she kept clinging to Mikado like this, he wouldn't be able to calm down. Then, said middle schooler stopped in front of a tall building.

"Ahhh! They got some new games! Hey hey, how about we play in here?"

"Umm... is this what they call a game center...? The place where younglings go when looking for fleeting amusement or to pass time when they have nothing better to do...?"

"Mikado-kun, you're still plenty young yourself! Did you never come to a game center like this?"

Mikado nodded. The noise he could hear outside, as well as the beeping and blinking machines, was something never present in the Kitamikado Family's residence.

"Pretty scary... We're barely standing at the entrance, and the noise is clearly audible. On top of that, the machines are all so close to each other, it doesn't look like there's much room to walk. If you get attacked there, it's over..."

"There's nobody in a game center that would attack you! Come on, let's go in!"

Mizuki pushed Mikado's back and they went inside the game center. Thus, Mikado was wrapped up in the tumult. It was a completely unknown world. Just as there were couples standing in front of big boxes with cranes moving inside, aiming for small toys, there were also those men that gazed at one-armed machines. Wherever Mikado looked, there wasn't the slightest feeling of happiness.

"A lair of criminals...?!"

“No! A game center!”

“I see...The Nanjou Family throws civilians in facilities like this, destroying their mental health, separating them from the outer world, turning them into cripples so that they become dependent on the Nanjou Family...”

“Not at all! We don’t invest in places like this at all! This place is made purely for amusement!”

“So I jumped to conclusions... Sorry.”

“Really! You really don’t know anything at all, Mikado-kun~” Mizuki laughed teasingly.

Taking Mikado by the hand, Mizuki brought him to a machine against the wall. Right in front of the screen were two guns and there were pedals beneath the pedestal.

“How about we try this?”

“This is... a shooting ground? I really think that having this in Japan is a bad idea...” Mikado was about to report this to the police.

“There won’t be any real bullets coming out! It’s just a gun-shooting game!”

Mizuki put a gun into Mikado’s hand and taught him how to use it. Apparently, you point the gun at the screen and reload with the trigger, using the pedals at their feet to move forward.

“Since it’s your first time, let’s play together. We’ll make it to the ending with the two of us!”

“All I have to do is shoot the enemy, right?”

“Yeah yeah! Shoot shoot, all the way!”

“...Understood.” Mikado readied his gun.

—Starting from the result.

They got a high score so extreme that the surroundings took notice of it. As the credits played on the screen, Mikado put the gun down on the pedestal.

“Amazing! Wah, wah, Mikado-kun?! Ehhh? Have you actually done this before?! This is the first time I got to the ending without a single continue!” Mizuki jumped up and down, forming fists with her hands.

“Well... Playing the game was the first time, but I was taught how to properly use a gun. As the successor of the Kitamikado Family, they expect me to hold my ground solo against a full platoon.”

“They’re expecting way too much of you!”

“That just shows the amount of responsibility I have. I can’t just rely on the military to protect my precious country.”

On top of that, he couldn’t allow himself to be wrapped up in the darkness of the Nanjou Family. However, never mind Kisa, there was not a single inkling of darkness emitting from Mizuki. Mizuki was currently busy gazing at the screen, tightly gripping her gun.

“Woooah, so if you clear the game with no continues, the ending is composed of cute bird videos~ First time I’ve seen it... So healing~”

“Completely unrelated to the game itself, huh.”

And the cheering was more than annoying, clearly showing how the staff didn’t care or didn’t expect someone to clear this without continues in the first place. Either way, the ending was more than mysterious to see there, which even made their surroundings take pictures and videos of it. Mikado just sighed to that, shrugging his shoulders.

“Now, what’s next?”

“Um...you’re okay with coming along with me?”

“Hm? What do you mean?”

Mizuki looked up at Mikado, her eyes round.

“The things you do to have fun are completely different, right? Whenever I invite someone to play, they would just decline, saying they didn’t have time for this nonsense...”

“Ahhh...” Mikado grasped the problem.

The students from Sousei Academy would probably react like that. Belonging to the elite of the elite, they would have corresponding familial values, which results in them most likely being more distanced to the world of normal people.

“It was a bit of a culture shock, but I don’t hate it or anything. The feelings of the citizens will surely end up being informative and it’s fine as long as I have fun, right?”

“Right? Right! Just hating it without trying it is not good, right?! There’s no relation to enjoyment and value after all!” Mizuki gleefully pushed her body forward.

“Prejudices only limit one’s own world and view. Testing out a lot of things is not a bad thing!”

“See! Mikado-kun, you totally get it!”

Though Mikado didn’t quite get what he did so well, he apparently managed to make a good impression on Mizuki. Mizuki pushed her face, which looked exactly like Kisa’s, towards Mikado and he grew a bit more flustered.

“H-Hey...”

“Then, then, let’s try that next! Let’s take a selfie at the photo booth over there!” Mizuki energetically pulled on Mikado’s arm.

Entering the area which was marked as prohibited for males, passing through the holy land inhabited only by girls and walking past the picture of the overseas model, a mysterious atmosphere greeted Mikado. A big screen was draped down in front of them. The walls, the ceiling, everything was a pure white, all very dazzling.

“Doesn’t seem like the cameraman is here...”

“Because we take it ourselves! After pressing a button on the screen, you strike a pose and that’s it!” With skilled movement, Mizuki threw a coin into the machine. A loud sound came out as a response, and the photoshoot started.

“Come on, cling a bit more to me! We won’t fit into the picture!”

“Y-Yeah...”

As Mizuki clung to his chest, Mikado tried his best to strike a pose while his entire body froze up. Following the announcer’s orders, he was pressed with new challenges, making this more difficult than some exams Mikado had to go through.

“Alright, let’s do a kiss pic next! We’ll take it while kissing each other!”

“As if I’d join that!”

Whilst fending off Mizuki who was closing in with her lips tightly shut, the photoshoot finally came to an end. Moving over to the next booth, they could now decide on any graffiti or scribbling they wanted on it. Mikado was questioning why there was even a need for that, but he decided to leave it to Mizuki for now. After a few minutes had passed, that process came to an end as well and Mizuki took out the finished product from the booth, happily inspecting it as her eyes sparkled.

“Waaah, I did it! A selfie with Mikado-kun! We look like a couple!”

“There’s a bit of a difference in age though.”



Watching Mizuki get happy like a small child, Mikado felt his own cheeks relax. Unlike Kisa, whose Nanjou Family blood was clearly more prominent, her little sister was more of a small animal, worth protecting.

"I'll make this my treasure! I'll put it in my student pass, and carry it everywhere!"

"You don't have to go that far, really."

When Mikado responded with a bitter smile,

"Aha..." Mizuki...gave a weirdly disheartened laugh. "I definitely will... After all...this is the proof that Mikado-kun and I went on a date, right?" However, her expression changed quickly, into one akin to a devil.

The breath she leaked while licking her red lips was very unlike her.

"Eh..."

In a second, Mikado immediately felt like something was off. A faint chill ran up his spine.

"No no no! This isn't a date or anything! You are just my future little sister! And I joined you today so that you would give me some secret information about Kisa!"

"Hehe, what a shame~ A boy and a girl going out on their free day, doing window shopping, playing at a game center, all these things combined is what we would call a date! This was a pretty popular date course, you know?" Mizuki announced broadly.

Showing her adorable fangs, she flashed a teasing smile as she looked up at Mikado.

"No...way..."

"I wonder what Onee-chan would think if I showed her this picture of us~? She might just start hating Mikado-kun, you know~?"

On top of that, she continued to wave the pictures she had just taken in front of Mikado's face.

"Ugh..."

Mikado had been too soft. He had underestimated her. Had

underestimated it. The blood of the Nanjou Family. No matter how harmless she might seem, how much of a cute and honest girl she might be, a Nanjou is a Nanjou no matter what. They would trap other people and make them resign, using whatever arts of coaxing necessary to get what they wished for.

And now, this girl— Nanjou Mizuki, who seemed more peaceful than Kisa, is actually nastier than her older sister. Playing the cute and helpless girl, she had hid her true personality.

“It’s fiiiine~ Even if Onee-chan started hating you, I’ll accept you with all I have~” said Mizuki, poking Mikado’s jaw.

Her young eyes were trembling with burning hot intoxication. Even if she looked like a young girl, she was without a doubt a woman. And, this counted as Mikado’s punishment, for he had not realized that she had joined this love game. Since Kisa didn’t share Mikado’s romantic feelings, he couldn’t imagine that she would receive that much of a shock, but it would certainly lower her affection for him no doubt. She might even break off the love game with Mikado.

“Can you... maybe keep this a secret from Kisa...?”

Mikado knew he was asking for a lot, especially since she was a fellow Nanjou. To his surprise however—

“Okay~!” Mizuki just nodded along.

“Seriously?!” Mikado couldn’t believe his ears at first.

“Yeah! I don’t want to trouble Mikado-kun after all! I like you the most when you’re laughing!”

“Phew... Don’t scare me like that.” As Mikado expressed relief, Mizuki whispered towards him.

“But, this means that you have to obey whatever I say, right...?”

“You’re suddenly not as good of a girl as I thought!”

“First... Let’s see~ Just a small favor! Let’s have sex!”

“That’s not small at all!”

“It’s fine~ You don’t have to come over to my house! We just have to do it here!”

“First and foremost, that’s a crime!”

The other guests around them started to grow wary of their conversation. Hence, Mikado just ignored the blissfully ignorant Mizuki, and escaped the game center.

“Well, I’m already seeing it...”

Glaring at a screen in complete darkness, Kisa muttered. She was wastefully using a long trailer, equipped with monitors, devices and possessing a variety of handicrafts, the supervision base belonging to the Nanjou Family. This time the van was used by Kisa herself and the commanding officer of her private unit, Sigma. They were watching Mikado’s every move.

With the sound recording device hidden inside Mizuki’s wallet, they were perfectly recording Mikado’s voice. Additionally, the hidden camera in Mizuki’s clothes, and the hacked security cameras in the street all helped in supervising Mikado’s body language.

“The first-in-succession and the second-in-succession on a date like this... the Nanjou Family sure has fallen...” Sigma sighed as she gazed at the screen.

“Don’t go complaining like that and go follow Mikado with the cameras. It’d be troublesome if they suddenly disappeared after a corner, only to run off to do some indecent things in secret.”

“Yes yes, I’ll properly do my job...”

Scratching her head, Sigma operated the lever on the terminal, changing the cameras. The figures of Mikado and Mizuki stepping out of the game center into the shopping center appeared. The cameras shown on the surveillance monitors switched to those stationed in convenience stores and banks. Kisa lifted her jaw.

“I’m being so kind as to let Mizuki roam free like this. With this, I

might be able to gain intel on Mikado, who normally doesn't show any weakness or openings in front of me. And, for the time when I eventually will go on a date with Mikado, I will have perfectly marked down his actions and patterns during the date. Basically, I might lose the battle, but I will win the war. After all, if I wasn't surveilling him like this, I would have never found out that he's interested in the various entertainment possibilities of a normal citizen, or that he's good at shooting a gun. This isn't stalking him or anything, it's just a preparation for war. Mizuki might think that she has the upper hand, but I'm just letting her dance in the palm of my hand. That is only to be expected from the queen of darkness and—”

“Eh...? Sorry, I wasn't listening.”

“Please listen to my monologue!” Kisa warned as she slammed a hand on the desk.

Even though the A/C should have been working, she felt her body burn up from the embarrassment. She might have realized that she was just making up excuses to follow Mikado on his date. At the same time, the camera she gazed at showed a scene of Mizuki rubbing her face on Mikado, clinging to him.

“W-What are you doing!? You're clinging to him way too much! Get away from him! I said get away!” Kisa screamed at the monitor.

“...Are you sure you're not just worried?” Sigma sighed next to her.

And thus, Mizuki's stomach rumbled.

“I'm starting to get a bit hungry~ It's because you keep pulling me around, Mikado-kun!”

“I'd like to state that it's the other way around.” Mikado commented calmly.

He had planned on finding a weakness of Kisa's in the process, but now Mizuki had actually managed to seize hold of Mikado thanks to the picture with the two of them in it. Now he was being pulled all over the shopping district by her. Luckily for him, the girl didn't force any unreasonable demands on him, but whether it was an accessory

shop or a miscellaneous store, she pulled him to all sorts of establishments specifically aimed at women.

That being said, the promise of receiving secret information about Kisa was still a reason to keep going, so he couldn't do anything to spoil Mizuki's mood.

"Also, you really don't have any intention of hiding that stomach rumbling of yours, right?"

Kisa would most likely turn bright red, but her little sister didn't seem perturbed in the slightest.

"Ehh, I can't help it if I'm hungry right? Should I just sing along to hide it?"

"Please don't. Anyway, what should we eat...? French, or maybe Japanese...? I can't find anything nearby." Mikado looked around while they walked down the street.

All the other establishments around looked rather cheap and worn-down, making him a bit hesitant to set foot inside. Not to mention that he couldn't even tell what the respective stores were selling.

"There's one right over there! Let's eat there, at McDonald's!"

Mizuki pulled Mikado's arm yet again, taking him to a store with a red sign above. The inside was noisy and in tumult, the employees looking like a busy general on the warfront. Right in front of the registers were large lines and monitors stood next to the counters and on the walls, showing the current menus. The scent of oil filled the place, as mostly families or student groups were chatting and enjoying their dinner. Compared to the usual dining places that Mikado frequented with his parents or Rinka, it felt like a completely different world.

"I had heard stories about this place... In this world, the meat gets cut into such small pieces that you wouldn't be able to guess its original form. It was stuffed between buns and served with oil-dripping fried potatoes, only meant as a breeding ground..."

"This isn't some breeding ground, it's McDonald's! Is this your first-

time eating fast food?”

“At the Kitamikado Household, we mostly have unpolished rice in a vegetable-based diet. I guess it wouldn’t be bad to try out this alien culture for once.”

“Ahaha, that’s Mikado-kun for you! When I invited Onee-chan or some friends from school, they’d all declined.” Mizuki happily lined up at the end of the long line of customers, ordered the second-cheapest meal and took a seat at an open table. Although it counted as the second cheapest, the sheer amount and volume left Mikado in a bit of a shock. It had hamburgers, fried potatoes and even a drink, all for just 500 yen. It was a completely different price-volume ratio from what Mikado was used to.

“...This has to be a trap! It can’t be this cheap!”

“Why would it be a trap!? This is normal market price!”

“Impossible... Is there some material in there that makes you get closer to death the more you eat...?”

“I don’t think you’d die from it~ I eat it a lot after all~”

“Is that so...? Well, different cultures, different traditions, I guess. It is my duty and responsibility as the future ray of hope for Japan to know what the people of this time are going on and on about.”

Mizuki just gave a carefree laugh.

“You don’t have to think too deeply about it~ It’s delicious, you know?”

“Alright, then it’s time to challenge it.”

Since there were no knives or forks around, Mikado judged that you were supposed to eat these things by hand. When he carefully started to reach for a fried potato, Mizuki’s hand quickly stopped him.

“Wait a second, Mikado-kun! You don’t eat the fried potatoes of McDonald’s like that!”

“Am I wrong? The people at the other tables are doing it the same way, so I thought...” Mikado gazed around the store interior.

But, Mizuki just strongly shook her head.

“That’s bad manners! Recently, customers don’t keep their manners in check at all, right? It’s a big problem in society today!”

Mikado’s eyebrows showed a heavy twitch at the word ‘bad manners’. For the successor of the Kitamikado Family, he always had to act and show himself with the best possible manners.

“I see...Then, teach me the right way to eat them.”

“Leave it to me~” Mizuki energetically tapped herself on the chest.

Picking up a fried potato from the colorful box, she put it between her teeth and pushed her face forward.

“Fere!”

“Excuse me...?”

“Fere, feat fis!”

Apparently, she was telling him to eat it.

“But, why via the mouth?”

Mizuki flapped her hands up and down.

“Foo fan foo! Fis is fe formal fay fof feating fit!”

“All I can hear is fi fie fo over there.” Mikado gave up on trying to interpret her words.

“Feeeeeh!”

Mizuki gulped down the fried potato and started complaining as she munched on it.

“If a boy and girl come to McDonald’s together, it’s good manners for them to eat it mouth to mouth! You just greatly embarrassed me as a

girl, you know?! You should take responsibility and join me!”

“I mean... isn’t that only the case with couples...?”

“Nooo! Be it a couple, or just friends, you always have to do it via the mouth! At this rate, we’ll get kicked out of McDonald’s~!”

Those words seemed to be spoken in true honesty, there was not a single fragment of deceit in Mizuki’s eyes. She emphasized that she was in the right. Confidence was emitted from her entire body.

“Doesn’t look like... you’re lying.”

“Because I’m not lying!”

“If it was Kisa, it’d definitely be a lie...”

“I’m not Onee-chan!” Mizuki showed a pure smile.

Through that smile, Mikado arrived at the conclusion that the girl was speaking the truth.

“I get it; I’ll believe you.”

“Very nice! Mikado-kun, come on!”

Mizuki put another fried potato in her mouth and pushed her body forward again. Resting her chin on her hands, her eyes sparkled in anticipation. Making up his resolve, Mikado approached Mizuki’s face with his own. From afar, you might have been able to clearly tell the differences between those sisters, but the closer he got, the more Mizuki resembled Kisa, entrancing him. From her hair, akin to Kisa’s, the same scent of shampoo floated over. From her white skin, a similar perfume odor that Kisa used tickled his nose. Meanwhile, Mizuki’s cheeks turned into a rosy color, as her dampened eyes looked straight at Mikado.

“Mmmm~~~”

Pushing her body up from the table, her lovable waist separated from the chair she was sitting on. Because the fried potato she had bit down on was rather short, their lips would be close to touching at

this rate.



“...I can’t after all!”

“Ahh, Mikado-kun, you idiot!”

Unable to bear the embarrassment, Mikado pushed his waist back onto the chair, as Mizuki tried to jump at him.

“W-W-What are those two doing?!”

At the same time, in the surveillance van, Kisa stared at the screen, as she started to panic. Shown on the monitor she was gazing at were Mikado and Mizuki clearly enjoying themselves a tad bit too much. Like lovers, they were getting close to feeding each other fried potatoes with their mouths. Although the situation ended without anything gravely bad happening, if their lips had touched for only a second, Kisa might have just completely eradicated the existence of that fast food store from the face of the earth. Naturally, with a bombardment from her private corps. And, the commander of said private corps, Sigma, gave her opinion with a rather disinterested and lax expression.

“Mmm... Mizuki-sama and the Kitamikado brat sure are getting it on, huh?”

“No no no! Not happening! Impossible! Even if the world stopped turning, this would be impossible! Hell would freeze over before this happened!” Kisa tried, already halfway to breaking out in tears.

But even so, while she couldn't help but doubt that this might just be the case, she couldn't accept it that easily. She couldn't allow that. Hence, she pointed at the monitor with her slender finger.

“For now, hack every single monitor in that entire store, and have them display ‘Kill Kill Kill Kill Kill’ so that Mizuki can see it!”

“I only think that this will make them unnecessarily wary of you.”

“Grrr...Then, play some death metal inside that store! Make it extra loud to break apart that lovey-dovey atmosphere between the two of them! Preferably the type that makes you feel dread for your life!”

“Again, that would just raise their wariness. Playing something like that inside a family restaurant would be too irregular.”

“But... but!”

Panicking and trying to find a way to interrupt them, Kisa tightly gripped her hands as she glared at the screen. Meanwhile, Sigma let out a sigh.

“Really, as soon as the Kitamikado brat comes into play, you change into a completely different person, Kisa-sama.”

“I don’t change at all! I’m the same as always!”

“If you were the same as always, you wouldn’t try to be as secretive as that. If you’re that worried, just break up their date right then and there.”

Kisa frantically shook her head.

“N-No! It’s my plan to have Mikado let down his guard in order to reveal his weaknesses. If I did that, all the time I was about to spit out blood waiting like this would have all been for naught, right?!”

“You’re about to spit out blood?! It’s that bad?!”

“Yes, it is! Just seeing Mikado talk with another girl makes my stomach ache!”

“Oh lord...” Sigma shrugged her shoulders.

“Even seeing Mikado talk with another boy, I keep having thoughts like ‘Does Mikado actually like boys?!’, you know!”

“That’s quite the heavy illness!”

“If I spot him carrying the luggage of an older person, the first thought that crossed through my mind is something like ‘Is Mikado’s strike zone actually 80 years and above?!’, and I can’t sleep all night!”

“Let’s go to the hospital right now! Okay?!”

Since this was actually the truth, Kisa couldn’t help it. No matter what she tried, actual knowledge and feelings were different. Instinct

was the most difficult to handle. Even now, after having thought of this plan and trying her best to pull through it, the damage Kisa was receiving was insane.

“Why was Mikado so close to accepting Mizuki feeding him with her mouth...There must be some reason for that, but I can’t find any in the audio recordings...”

“If I had to guess, then the hidden microphone in Mizuki-sama’s phone must have gotten destroyed.”

“S-So that means...” Kisa’s eyes opened wide.

At the same time, Sigma brought forth her conclusion.

“Yes, she must have realized that we were watching over them. By showing Kisa-sama how she approaches the Kitamikado brat, she’s most likely trying to make you jealous.”

“Mizukiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!” Kisa growled at the Mizuki inside the screen.

Meanwhile, Mizuki formed a naive smile, and gave a peace-sign towards one of the cameras inside the store.

“Oh my, now she’s even giving us a service.”

“I don’t need any service like that...!”

“This time it was a wink. She sure has long eyelashes.”

“Mine are long as well! Our faces are basically the same after all!”

Her little sister realized it. Rather, she even had all the locations of the security cameras marked down. And now, she was using this chance to play with her older sister. If it was Mizuki, that definitely sounded like her. She might look like an angel on the outside, but she was indeed a devil.

“Immediately fix the hidden microphone!!”

“Understood. I’ll have one of my subordinates do it.” Sigma raised her thumb and started giving out orders.

“Ahhh, some ketchup landed on my clothes! I’ll be right back, have to wash this off!”

Mizuki picked up her handbag and headed towards the restroom. Having been left alone, Mikado was munching on his food, as an employee from McDonald’s approached him.

“Dear customer... Dear customer...”

With a voice as if she feared for her life, she slowly walked towards him. It was a young woman, with long, glossy hair. She had crazy bags beneath her eyes, her expression was as pale as it gets, and her small and tender fingers were shaking furiously. She looked just like someone from the intensive care unit. While wondering if an employee like that had been present a few minutes ago, Mikado answered her.

“What’s wrong? Some sort of problem?”

Just now, he couldn’t uphold his manners by pulling away from Mizuki, so Mikado feared that she might have come to scold him.

“N-No, no problem at all... R-Rather, I have a present.”

“A present...?”

Having no recollection of being deserving of a present, Mikado was wary. If anything, it would be a present from the god of death, judging from the woman’s looks.

“Yes... With the Giant Chaos Big Hamburger that you have ordered, you receive a special item during our campaign, a badge to be precise... I had forgotten to hand it over before...”

With violently shaking hands, the employee took out said badge. It had the form of soft cream in a thick brown color. However, Mikado quickly understood that it wasn’t soft cream in the slightest.

“This is...”

“Yes, it is a poop badge.”

“What kind of present is this?! Not to mention in a restaurant?!”

“It’s a new character we have come up with.”

“Who thought of this?! This seems like it might just contradict with hygiene laws!”

“The children truly adore this.”

“All I can see is you getting scoffed at!”

“No need to hold back. Fuhehe...You want it, right?”

“I really don’t actually!”

As the employee moved closer to push the badge onto Mikado, he used all his strength to defend against her. Although he came here only for the sake of going shopping with Kisa’s little sister, his pride as the successor of the Kitamikado Family wouldn’t allow him to walk around the city with such a nasty piece of accessory attached to his clothes. No, even if he was just on a stroll, that fact wouldn’t change, no doubting it.

“No way... If our dear customer won’t accept it... then I will most likely be killed...” The employee sunk on the ground, crying.

“Killed...? Is this some black company here?” Mikado panicked ever so slightly.

He certainly didn’t appreciate the fact that the employee’s crying attracted the attention of the other customers. Not to mention the risk that Kokage could be stalking him, ready to take a picture of this whole situation.

“Yes...This is a black company...The reason my condition became this bad is because I was forced to work 24/7 with a smile without any pay, using up all my energy...”

“What...?”

Checking over to make sure it indeed said on the screen of the counter that a smile costs 0 yen. At first, he didn’t take her seriously,

but the more Mikado thought about it, the more he could find clues to believe her.

“You’re not even... allowed to cry?”

“Yes. Even the day I lost my lover, the day a piece of onion got into my eye... I was forced to keep up my smile... They even used clostridium botulinum to stiffen my smile.”

“...How fearful!”

Yet again, Mikado painfully realized the state of Japan’s corruption and the existence of slaves with barely any human rights left. He had to stop this nightmare at all costs. In order to achieve that, he had to follow the Kitamikado succession and bring down the Nanjou Family, proliferating the darkness in this country.

“As long as I don’t properly hand over this badge to the customers, I cannot go home... and I will be beat by my master...”

“That... is tough...”

“Please, save me... I don’t want to die beneath the winter sky... I’m scared...”

With a desperate expression, the employee looked up at Mikado, appealing to him. At first, Mikado thought of The Little Match Girl, and although it wasn’t quite Winter yet, he decided to swallow his doubts. If there’s a person in trouble, a Kitamikado should always reach out to them with a helping hand. Equally, not minding small stuff and taking it all in with their own power was equally the way of the Kitamikado Family.

“Alright, I get it. I’ll take it.”

“Thank you very much! I’ll go ahead and put it on your pocket!” The eyes of the employee lit up, as she started to attach it to Mikado.

Her weak condition from a second ago had completely vanished, as the color returned to her face.

“No, putting it on my clothes is a bit...”

“Even the back pocket is fine! Now! It has to be a place where we can hear your voice properly!”

“Voice...?”

“No no no! Nothing! Nothing at all!!”

After forcefully attaching the badge to the backside of Mikado’s pocket, the employee stormed off, towards the automatic door.

“Is she... going home right away?”

No matter how he thought about it, it was all too weird. And, while he tilted his head in confusion, Mizuki returned.

“Mikado-kun! Thanks for waiting! I washed it off!” She called out to him, as big droplets of water dropped off her body everywhere.

“You’re completely drenched!” Mikado jumped up.

Both her hair and clothes were soaked to the skin and she left footprints of water behind like a mermaid, but her smile was as unperturbed as ever. This wasn’t just on the level of wiping away a ketchup stain. It looked like she had taken a shower. While being wary of the employee’s suspicious gazes, Mikado walked towards her.

“Mmm, I never did any laundry washing myself~ Guess I failed a bit, tehe~”

“Failed or not...you don’t do the laundry with the clothes still on, you know!?”

“Eh, you don’t? You take them off and do it naked?! Isn’t that cold?!”

“Not in that sense! You pseudo-common person!”

She might have looked like it during the window shopping and fast food ordering, but she still was the daughter of the rich and famous Nanjou Family, akin to a sheltered princess. Unlike the Kitamikado Family, who educates their successors to be able to live all on their own, it wouldn’t be weird to not know the basics of doing laundry,

seeing that she most likely had servants for that.

“Also, how am I looking, all drenched like this? Am I sexy? Are you getting horny?”

Not even sitting down on her own seat, she cut a roundabout path towards Mikado. She put down her small butt on Mikado’s seat, looking up at him, as if to seduce him. Whether he wanted to or not, his gaze just practically got glued to her drenched and stretched clothes. The fabric of her T-shirt was sticking to her skin, showing her tender physique. Although they were rather discrete, two mounds were sticking out and the bra covering them was quite conspicuous. It was a frilly blue bra, with a cute ribbon.

“Oh my oh my~? Have you finally fallen victim to my charm, Mikado-kun? Your gaze is glued to me~” Mizuki put the palm of her hand on her mouth, provoking him.

“No, it’s not glued or anything.”

“Ahaha, that’s a bad lie! You totally have the face of a man right now!”

“Not at all!”

“Well, I wouldn’t know what that face looked like anyway!”

“Then don’t tease me like that!” Mikado pulled his gaze away from her.

He quickly had to calm down his beating heart. He couldn’t allow himself to get seduced by Mizuki, even if she wasn’t part of the game. This time, all he had to focus on was playing along, in hopes of getting any valuable information out of her about Kisa.

“By the way, Onee-chan actually has the exact same bra as this one.”

“What?!”

Hearing these words whispered to him at close range, Mikado unconsciously looked down at Mizuki’s chest again. However, what awaited him was just a teasing grin of hers, as she stuck out her

tongue.

“Just kidding! Kya~ You’re staring at my underwear~”

“You...!”

Yet again, Mikado painfully realized that, while she didn’t have any malicious ill intentions like Kisa, Mizuki wouldn’t give him anything for free like that. And because she was acting like this, showing no real ill will, he couldn’t completely get angry at her.

“Come on, sit tight for a second.”

Mikado took out a handkerchief from his pocket, and started to wipe down Mizuki’s hair. Dodging her enticing chest, he continued down to her clothes. Meanwhile, Mizuki was flapping her arms and legs up and down in protest.

“Ehhh! That’s the wrong reaction though!”

“It’s not.”

“No, it clearly is! You should be more flustered! Why are you treating me like a kid!?”

“Because you are one. Don’t make a ruckus here.”

“Uuuu!” Mizuki puffed out her cheeks in a pout, but still proceeded to close her eyes, so Mikado could wipe her face.

When the tips of his fingers touched her cheek, her shoulders jumped up ever so slightly.

“Mmm... But, this isn’t too bad...either...”

Her body moved along to Mikado’s hands like a small puppy, making him feel a bit warmer inside. Even if she was crafty and cunning most of the time, nothing could change the fact that she was a middle schooler. Ignoring her forced eroticness, her cuteness and age stood out more. Once most of the water had dried up from her hair and clothes, Mizuki just calmly returned to her own seat. She hung over the desk as she bit on the straw, blowing into it to form bubbles.

“Hey, that’s bad manners.”

“...I don’t care.”

Though her expression was formed by her having tasted defeat like this, her cheeks were colored a faint red. Eventually, Mizuki separated her lips from the straw and looked up at Mikado.

“Say, Mikado-kun, you’re pretty strong towards anyone but Onee-chan, right? Not bad.”

“I don’t know what you’re playing at, but...Thank you, I guess?”

“But, your heart still must be beating, right? You’re just doing your hardest to cover it up.”

“Not at all.”

Bulls-eye.

Even the sober and honest successor of the Kitamikado Family had trouble covering up his excitement, especially since Mizuki looked exactly like Kisa.

“Why am I not good enough? Onee-chan is selfish, sadistic, greedy and really not the type of lover I’d recommend~”

“Well, from an outsider’s perspective, she’s a demon.”

“Right?! Like the great King of Hell, with no blood or tears!”

“Indeed.”

When Mikado nodded along, he felt a chill run down his spine. He felt like he heard a resentful voice behind his back, but since there was nothing behind him, he judged it was just his imagination.

“Then, why are you in this love game with Onee-chan? Even if you get her to become your slave, she’ll stay the same King of Hell anyway, don’t you think?”

“Well... I guess so. But even so, she’s got some good parts to her.”

“Ehhh? For example?” Mizuki asked, sounding a bit doubtful.

Mikado snickered faintly.

“She might look forcefull and strong, but she’s got an unexpected clumsy side.”

“Ahh, yeah. That’s a thing. I do like the cool Onee-chan a lot, but her being a good-for-nothing is not bad either.”

“That’s the best part. Her eyes that are sometimes filled with fear, or her panicking in some situations... is cute.”

“Mikado-kun... Are you actually a sadist?” Mizuki pulled her body away from the table.

For once, she looked at him with a pure feeling of discomfort. Quite the new experience for Mikado.

“I’m not a sadist! Just, you know, it makes me want to tease her a bit, so that she panics a bit more. You get what I mean, right?”

“Ahaha, I do I do. I love teasing Onee-chan until she threatens to let me drown between the Tokyo Bridge!”

“I’m sorry, but I can’t really comprehend that pleasure...”

This time, Mikado pulled his body away from the table.

“Ehh, you don’t? Like, ‘Ohh she’s going to kill me for sure, that’s how angry she is’ kind of thing?”

“No idea! What kind of alien are you?”

Mikado’s expression went blank, as he started to feel a bit terrified of Mizuki. A Nanjou really is a Nanjou. At the same time, Mizuki pushed her body forward, her eyes sparkling.

“What else, what else? What other things do you like about Onee-chan?”

“Her... scent, I guess.”

“Mikado-kun, you pervert!”

“N-No, don’t get me wrong! It’s just, how could one fall in love with someone that’s smelling rotten! It’s said that this separation between smell has been passed down from the first humans, you know! Basically, the scent is an important factor in determining one’s affection for another!”

“Then, what about my scent?”

“.....” Mikado swallowed his words.

To be completely honest, her scent was equally soothing. Though that had to be expected, seeing that she was related to Kisa.

“I see, so you like my scent as well~ Makes sense, Onee-chan and I have the same genes after all~ Does that mean that our compatibility is pretty good as well?”

Mizuki put her hands on the desk, grinning to herself as she waited for Mikado’s response.

“Hey? Mikado-kun, you think our genes would be a good match?”

“Stop it.”

“I won’t~ I like seeing Mikado-kun panic after all!”

“You’re doing this for fun?!”

“I’m not sure, but probably!”

“Don’t admit it if you’re not sure!”

“Who cares about that~ If you like my scent, then we’re good to go, right~?”

As Mizuki approached him over the table, Mikado bent his body backwards.

“It’s not just her scent! There are other things that make Kisa cute! It’s cute how she always is quick to cry, how she gets arrogant only to

have it end up in failure, how she always tries to twist and turn things so that she's not a loser in the end! She has a lot of things that make her cute, okay!?"

"Hmmm... is that so~" Mizuki sunk deeper into her chair.

Meanwhile, Mikado put a hand on his chest, as he gasped for air. It was actually quite tiring for him to put up with Kisa's little sister like this. He could feel his entire body getting tired, both physically and mentally. Mizuki however just gazed at the desk and muttered.

"Mikado-kun, you really are way too honest and diligent for your own good. It's like you don't stop once you start running..."

"Well I'm sorry for being an idiot like that." Countered Mikado.

"But... I don't dislike that sort of thing..."

Mizuki's cheeks turned a faint red as she muttered to herself.

Leaving McDonald's behind, Mizuki stretched her tender body.

"Ahhh, that was great~ I can't eat any more~"

"You sure sound satisfied..."

In response to Mizuki screaming that out loud in the middle of the shopping district, the other passengers gave her weird and confused gazes. However, Mizuki showed no signs of caring about that in any way shape or form.

"Well of course I am! I love eating out at McDonald's! Not to mention that I had Mikado-kun with me and we talked a lot, so I'm happy as can be!"

"I-Is that so...? Glad to hear it."

Seeing her genuinely being happy like that, Mikado grew a bit flustered. Although he couldn't exactly let down his guard around her, he didn't dislike being with her. That probably showed that their compatibility wasn't bad

“But, I’m still a bit embarrassed that we didn’t do that fried potato feeding...That was crazy rude to the other people around after all and I might not be able to go to that store again...” Mizuki narrowed her eyes in a saddened manner.

“Sorry... I’m really reflecting on it. In return, I’ll join you to visit whatever place you want to see next.”

“Yay! Then I want to go to space!”

“Please keep it inside Japan, okay?!”

“Umm...So anywhere near here is fine?” Mizuki tilted her head as she asked.

“Please keep it within a 20km radius.”

“So as long as it’s inside there, it’s fine? You sure?” She asked in a slightly hesitant manner.

“Yeah, sure.” Mikado smiled.

He might very well be dragged to a sweets store, or some boutique aimed at women, but he mentally prepared himself for that.

“Then then, I want to go there!”

Her small and tender index finger pointed at a billboard above the entrance of an overly decorated building, saying ‘Hotel Immoral’. The design resembled a European castle from the middle ages. Next to the entrance was a sign, showing the prices for taking a break or even staying the night. You could watch whatever videos you wanted, and you even got a welcome drink. Naturally, even Mikado, who was not educated in this sort of thing, had heard about this sort of place.

“I see... A castle, huh...? You want to see a castle... You are a girl after all...”

“Eh, it’s not a castle though? I want to go to a love hotel, you know?”

“I tried to escape reality there, so don’t say it so directly!”

“It’s a place where boys and girls do perverted stuff, you know?”

“I know! I know, so don’t make it clearer!”

Mikado felt a fierce heat build up inside his body and rushing up to his head. This truly was his first time being invited to a love hotel by a girl. In his family, where any sort of romantic relationship or even contact with women, was prohibited, it was tradition to keep one’s virginity until the wedding night with one’s fiancé.

“Now, let’s go, Mikado-kun! You promised, didn’t you?”

“I didn’t promise anything! I was prepared for a lot of places, but not that! I definitely can’t!”

“Of course you can! Mikado-kun, you can do everything! You’re a man, so work for it! It’s my first time as well, but I’ll try my best!”

“What are you cheering me on for?!”

“I mean, I was drenched to my skin only a few minutes ago, so that I don’t catch a cold, I want to go to a warm place!” Mizuki continued to pull on Mikado’s sleeve.

“Then why don’t you just go home for today...?”

“I don’t want to! The date has just started! And it’s a long way home, so I’ll definitely catch a cold before I make it! Ahh, ahh, achooo!”

“Try to fake your sneezes a bit better, will you?!”

Mikado had planted his feet stiffly into the ground, as Mizuki twisted her body to fake a sneeze. Following that, she whispered in a sweet and seductive voice into Mikado’s ear.

“Come on~ Let’s warm each other up... I won’t do anything, okay...?”

“Aren’t our roles reversed a bit?!”

“I said I would be giving you some information about Onee-chan,

right? I'll show you her weakness in a real battle! She has the same weaknesses as I do after all!"

"What kind of battle are we talking about here?!"

Since he couldn't just push away Mizuki with all his strength, he instead lifted up both her arms to stop her.

"Fufufu, I also like Mikado-kun's scent. Sniff sniff sniff..."

"Don't sniff me like that! And don't rub your head on me!"

Mizuki didn't care much about the suspicious gazes from the people around them, and clung to Mikado's waist. Following that, the loud sound of breaks being hit resounded and a car made a sudden stop next to the two of them. People wrapped in pitch-black clothes jumped out of the trailer and pulled both Mikado and Mizuki inside. Though Mikado tried his best to resist the sudden assaultants, they proceeded to put a sack over his head, rendering him defenseless. Immediately after they were inside the trailer, it started driving at high speed. This all happened in the window of less than a single second.

—They're way too skilled at this! This can't be the work of an amateur!

In order to possibly find a way to break out of this situation, Mikado waited and didn't attempt a weak counterattack. However, in order not to lose their own position, he drew a mental map inside his head and noted every turn and stop. At the same time, Mizuki tightly gripped Mikado's hand as she was stuffed into the same row of seats. Although she might belong to the Nanjou Family, first and foremost, she was still a middle school second-year and a girl on top of that. Being abducted, she couldn't stay calm, Mikado knew that very well. She must be afraid beyond belief. Deciding that he should give her some more courage, he returned her hand's grip. She clung to his waist and buried her head in his chest.

"Mikado-kun... I'm scared..."

"...It's okay. I'm here with you."

Mikado embraced the shivering Mizuki in his arms. She had the same scent as Kisa and the same temperature as a girl, making his heart burning hot with a desire to protect her. Finally, the trailer parked. Mikado felt something akin to a gun point pressed against his back, as he walked forwards. Following that, he heard the heavy sound of an opening door accompanied by a chilly atmosphere.

—Eh? Is this...? No, it can't be...?

Though, through following the map inside his head, Mikado had arrived at a conclusion as to what building this should be, but he was still doubtful. However, even as he was torn between his conclusion and confusion, Mikado had to walk forward. Another loud, metallic sound resounded, as the door behind them closed. The sack on his head was finally taken off and he could inspect the scenery in front of him now. Rows of seats for the public were lined up. A seat for the accused and the attorney, facing the seat of the judge. No matter how you looked at it, Mikado and Mizuki were brought to a court. And the one standing at the judge's seat, looking down with overwhelming pressure was—

“Now, let us begin the love trial!!”

“So it was you?!”

“I thought so~ Heyho, Onee-chan~”

It was Nanjou Kisa. Mikado went to direct his gaze at Mizuki, who was standing right next to him.

“So you knew who the mastermind was?!”

“Well, of course I did? This is how it ends most of the times I get kidnapped~ The staff held back after all, giving us some room to breathe.” Mizuki giggled, as if this wasn't a problem at all for her.

“What do you mean most of the time...? And staff... Were you not scared?!”

“Ah, yeah yeah! Kyaaa, Mikado-kun! Mizuki is so scared!” She clung to Mikado's arm.

At the same time, Kisa swung her arm down on the desk.

“Will you get away from him already!? I really wasn’t planning on bringing out the big guns like this, but... You two were about to enter a very dangerous place, so I had to emergency abduct you like that!”

“Ehh, what place are you talking about? I don’t get what you’re saying~?”

“Y-You know very well what I mean!”

“I’m an idiot, right? That’s why I forget things immediately. What place are we talking about?”

Mizuki put her index finger on her lips, clearly playing dumb as she looked up at her older sister.

“I-It was a l...l-lo...” Kisa’s mouth opened and closed like a fish’s, her face as red as a tomato.

“Lo...? Come on, Onee-chan, you need to finish it! A bit more! You want me to give you a hint? It starts with ‘Love Hotel’! Did that help?”

“You just blurted it out! Just stop it already.” Mikado softly chopped Mizuki’s head.

He certainly didn’t hate watching the embarrassed Kisa panic like this, but being forced to listen to this was more torture than anything.

“Yaaay! Mikado-kun got angry at me!”

To everyone’s surprise, Mizuki actually jumped up and down out of pure joy. Kisa let out a sigh.

“Anyway! We properly recorded your da— Your stroll through the city and even have video proof!”

“What did you say...?”

Mikado felt a chill run down his spine. That would mean Kisa had

already seen their intimacy during their photoshoot, as well as the whole fried potato dilemma. Although he couldn't help the fried potato incident because that seemed to be good manners, Kisa, who equally had no idea about the manners of ordinary citizens would definitely get the wrong idea, one of the most dangerous situations to imagine.

—This is bad.

Mikado panicked. The condition to win the love game was to make Kisa fall for him, so lowering her affection to a level where she would hate him was the worst possible outcome.

“Trial... are you going to judge the relationship between Mizuki-chan and I?”

“You can just call me Mizuki, Onii-chan~”

The girl that was frantic about entering a love hotel with Mikado now started to address him like an older brother. At the same time, Kisa crossed her arms as she looked down.

“I know that there's no relationship worth discussing about between the two of you! That's not important right now!”

“Why are we even here then?! Why did you call us here?!” Mikado started to get even more confused about the situation.

Next to him, Mizuki had already given up on the situation and sat down on the ground, playing a game on her smartphone.

“The only reason I ignored your stroll until now was all so that I could get some sort of crucial voice recording of Mikado. I was hoping that I might catch some of Mikado's true affection towards me while he was out with Mizuki, because he normally wouldn't show me...”

“Don't tell me...”

As Mikado got a bad premonition, Kisa flashed a devilish smile.

“Yes, that's right. I properly grasped the proof of your affection

towards me! Using this proof, I will move to my victory in this love game!”

“Ugh... so that’s why you brought us to the court here...”

“Yes, I went ahead and reserved it. We have good relationships with the judges, you see...”

“You damned Nanjou...!”

What fearful influence they boast. Though he didn’t know what methods she used, but it seems like she even control people working for the light itself. However, Mikado couldn’t just sit there in silence.

“I request an advocate!”

“Rejected! This game is between Mikado and I!”

“At least some third party judge!”

“Rejected! It’d be troublesome if any information concerning the Kitamikado Family and Nanjou Family leaked to the public!”

“At least a third party witness!”

“Rejected! I will be the presiding judge, the public prosecutor and the witness all in one!”

“What kind of pretense trial is this!?”

“Don’t worry. The decision of the presiding judge will be just and upright, a clean handed judgement.”

“All I can do here is worry!”

Mikado couldn’t imagine a just and upright Kisa, even if heaven and earth were reversed. Kisa raised up a judge’s hammer she had pulled out of somewhere and slammed it on the sounding block. Normally a Japanese judge wouldn’t even use that, but this was the least of Mikado’s concerns right now.

“...Let us start with the first piece of evidence.”

Kisa pressed a button on a nearby recorder, to which a voice of Mikado leaked out of a nearby speaker.

Well...I guess so. But even so, she's got some good parts to her too.

— So she's even got that!

Hearing that phrase, Mikado immediately realized that this was the worst possible scenario to be in. Being played was his conversation with Mizuki back in the fast food store. He didn't perfectly remember every single detail of what he had spoken of, but he clearly remembered that he was getting very passionate about why he preferred Kisa over Mizuki. Right from the beginning, he was at an immediate disadvantage. Gazing down from the presiding judge's seat, Kisa looked like a true demon.

"This... can only be seen as a confession of love towards me, right?!"

"How did you arrive at that conclusion?!"

That alone wasn't nearly convincing enough.

"After all, you said that I have 'good aspects', right? That is the same as saying that I don't have any 'bad aspects'! Conclusion, you confessed your love to me with those words!"

"That conclusion is a bit ridiculous, Nanjou!" Mikado unconsciously reverted back to his old way of addressing her.

However, Mikado knew that this was nothing but the prelude to the harsh battle awaiting him.

"Then... what about this?"

Kisa lifted up her beautiful lips and pressed the play button on the recorder again.

What else what else? What else do you like about Onee-chan, Mikado-kun?

Her scent... I guess.

Following Mizuki's question, everyone heard Mikado's raw and undecorated answer. Those were his true feelings, which he would normally never let out on a normal day, but he was careless against the pure Mizuki. Thanks to that, it all worked towards Kisa's plan.

"Ugh..." Mikado had to suppress his frustration by fisting his hands.

At the same time, Kisa snickered to herself.

"Now then, what does this mean, I wonder? You like my scent? I do think that this is a way of showing your affection towards me, is it not?"

"...Just because I like your scent doesn't mean that I like you as a member of the opposite sex."

A valid protest. However...

"But, after that you emphasized the important connection between a pleasant scent and compatibility with the opposite sex, didn't you? What kind of meaning does this have? I can only hear this as a statement of yours, saying that because you like my scent, you think that we might be a good fit."

"Even if that is the case... that doesn't mean that there are any romantic feelings involved..."

"Would you announce your good compatibility with a person you hate? You say that because you have some sort of positive affection towards me, am I not right?"

"Ugh..."

Mikado was getting pushed into a corner. Above him, the figure of Kisa glaring down at him looked bigger and bigger the longer this situation went on. Her eyes, sure of her victory and brimming with a fragment of devilish pride, would not let Mikado get away from this under any circumstances.

The situation was getting worse for Mikado. And that was to be expected, seeing that he actually held romantic affection for her. So much that there had been many times where he had been close to

giving up on reason. If he didn't manage to find a way to retaliate here, it would be all over. This might be one of the most dangerous and fierce battles these two families had ever fought.

Mikado had his thoughts rotating inside his head at full speed, trying to look for an escape route. No matter how high the risk, he had to escape from here. Finally, the one single method he found was—

“You’re wrong... I’m just an olfactophile!”

Although his entire body was trying to resist out of shame, he had no other choice but to use that card now.

“An... olfactophile...?”

Receiving a counterattack from a direction she didn't expect, Kisa clicked her tongue.

“Yeah, that’s right! I’m obsessed with the scent of a woman! That’s why I was so enthusiastic about it! The reason I brought up compatibility with the opposite sex was also for that reason! It was just the talk of a man getting seduced by the smell of women!”

“But, that doesn’t change the fact that you said you liked my scent, right?”

“Shit!” Mikado slammed down on the desk.

He couldn't escape. At this rate, he would be wrapped up in her tactics, driven deeper down the rabbit hole until he would end up as her slave. Regret and irritation filled his body. Meanwhile, Kisa was gazing down at Mikado, like a snake with her prey right in front of her.

“Now... Mikado. Come here. Resistance is futile, okay...?” Kisa offered in a soft, flirtatious voice.

Additionally, she waved her delicate, beautiful fingers at him.

— Is there no other way to fight back here?!

It happened right then and there, when Mikado grit his teeth in

despair. Mizuki, who had been playing a game, gave a good, long stretch and stood up. And then, she raised her hand.

“Me me me! I’ll be Mikado-kun’s attorney!”

Kisa glared at Mizuki.

“...What? I remember saying I wouldn’t allow any attorneys?”

“Alright, I’ll start with the defence!”

“You’re just ignoring me?!”

“This middle school student... is actually strong?!” Mikado’s eyes opened wide.

Mizuki didn’t pay much mind to the rules that Kisa set up. She was just moving according to her own will and desire. Hence, the entry of the second snake happened. Even if they were young, her fangs were still fangs powerful enough to fight back against Kisa.

“I really think that just because he likes your scent doesn’t mean that he actually has any romantic feelings for you~”

“And why is that?”

“After all, I like the Karaage-kun that I’m always eating.”

“Karaage isn’t a member of the opposite sex, right?!”

“I’m adding a -kun, so it’s a man.”

“That’s not the case just because you added a -kun at the end!”

“Karaage-chan would be a girl then.”

“Why would I care!? I’m not talking about food, but about boys and girls!”

“Wahh, so you’re having some perverted talk? Onee-chan, you pervert!”

“There’s nothing perverted here!” Kisa’s breathing grew rougher.

“And I’m talking about the food, not about boys and girls! It’s true that Mikado-kun said that he liked Onee-chan’s scent. But, he likes your juicy scent as a food!”

“Scary! Eh, what? You’re saying that Mikado is a cannibal?”

“Exactly!” Mizuki pointed up at Kisa.

“That is what Mikado-kun wanted to say! He likes Onee-chan’s smell as a food, and that you trigger his appetite! He especially likes frying meat of the opposite sex to enjoy it!”

“That’s even more scary! And as if that was the case!” Kisa screamed down, slightly pale.

“Mikado-kun, how about you say it yourself? What I just said is what you told me before, right?” Mizuki gazed over at Mikado.

It was really irrational reasoning. However, there was no other way to escape from that rotten princess up in the tower in front of him. Hence, Mikado nodded along.

“Absolutely correct. Kisa’s smell awakened my appetite, that’s all there is to it.”

“That’s a lie! Mikado isn’t the type to eat other humans!”

“Sorry. The thing is, there were many times when I was close to making you my lunch.”

“Uuuuu...!”

If one just emphasized this very fact, there was almost no chance of failure. So strong was this logic of logics. It completely destroyed every previous argument and by ignoring the essence of being human, a rational retort is impossible.

“Ehehehe~ It was the right choice to hire me as your attorney, right?”

“I didn’t hire you or anything.”

“You sure did! And the price is five thousand dates!”

“That will take me the rest of my life to repay!”

“Kyaaa! Mikado-kun will look after me until I get old!” Mizuki showed a carefree smile, but he was observing her in a different manner.

—She’s good!!

She did her job even more efficiently than he had anticipated. Since it was so over the top and ridiculous to counter, she completely rendered Kisa’s arguments fruitless.

“T-Then, what about this next!? You can’t get away from this, right?!”

Yet again, Kisa pressed a switch on the recorder. What was played was a continuation of their previous conversation in the fast food restaurant.

“It’s not just her scent! There are other things that make Kisa cute! It’s cute how she always is quick to cry, how she gets arrogant only to have it end up in failure, how she always tries to twist and turn things so that she’s not a loser in the end! She has a lot of things that make her cute, okay!?”

The moment the recording stopped, Mikado prepared himself for death. His expressions were so bare and direct, there truly weren’t any ways for him to escape that. And, while her ears were slightly red, Kisa stopped the replay.

“S-See...Mikado, you said so, didn’t you? T-That I am...cute...”

“I did...say that, but...”

He could not deny that.

“P-Praising me so much and calling me cute, you normally don’t do that, do you...? That means that you really really really think of me

as cute, right...?” Kisa asked in a flustered manner, pressing the tips of her fingers together.

—The presiding judge is a maiden!

With the pressing proof, the flawless logic and the presiding judge’s overwhelming cuteness, Mikado received a direct hit. All he could do was to fist his hands again and try to endure it.

“Okay okay~ Can the presiding judge please not use seductive techniques~!?” Mizuki showed her discontent as she raised up a fist.

Kisa however didn’t respond to that complaint. All she did was fidget with her hands and responded in a soft voice, her cheeks starting to burn a bright red.

“I-I’m not seducing him or anything... I’m just testing... Because I’d be happy if that was the case...”

“Kuh... Gahh...”

“Mikad-kun?! Mikado-kun?! Pull yourself together! Why are you spitting blood?! What happened to you?!”

As Mikado had suffered too much from Kisa’s charm, Mizuki was frantically looking after him. He could barely stand up to put one hand on the desk, his body swaying back and forth.

“Mizuki... Apologies...but I’ll die.”

“Don’t die! We can still go on! There are still ways to win against Onee-chan!”

“But... Kisa is way too cute... She really is cute...Ahhh, so friggin cute...”

“Don’t give up yet! Don’t fall for her temptations! She might not look like it, but she could have someone stuffed into the concrete at the snap of her fingers!”

By bending Mikado’s finger to the level where he felt an intense pain, he was brought back to life and his thoughts came to a stop. Trying

his best not to look up at Kisa, he took a deep breath.

“Haaaaaa... T-Thank you, I somehow made it back...”

“Thank god...A bit more and you were about to break...”

Rather than any form of logic, the presiding judge’s true face and emotions were much more dangerous and powerful. Mizuki put one hand on her waist and gazed straight up at Kisa.

“Hey, can I ask one thing? How did you interpret Mikado-kun’s words as a statement that you are cute? Maybe it was just a mistake on your end?”

“I didn’t misunderstand anything! He properly said I was cute!”

“What exactly did he say? As the presiding judge, you have to properly tell us or we won’t know.”

“F-For example...‘It’s cute how she always is quick to cry’...” Kisa’s voice disappeared towards the end of that sentence.

“Ehhh? Sorry, I didn’t catch that!” Mizuki asked, putting one hand on her ear.

“He said ‘It’s cute how she always is quick to cry’, okay?!”

“That’s all? Just one won’t be enough for proof, don’t you think? What else did he say?”

“S-Stop! Don’t make me repeat it!” Kisa’s face grew even redder.

All the calmness and superiority vanished from her expression. Like it had all been a lie.

— I see...I see what she’s playing at!

Mikado guessed Mizuki’s intention. Yet again, it wasn’t based on logic, but a psychological attack, based on Kisa’s emotions. Whenever she was on the attack, Kisa’s raw power was immense, but as soon as she was pressed into defence, she would slowly start to crumble. That’s Kisa’s little sister for you. Through her daily battles with her,

she perfectly had her every weakness marked down.

“Then, how about I repeat myself?”

Mikado took one step forward, towards the seat of the presiding judge.

“Eh...” Kisa’s expression was colored in wariness.

“It’s not just her scent! There are other things that make Kisa cute!”

“Hyaa?!” A rather pathetic shriek escaped Kisa’s lips at Mikado’s sudden words.

Confirming that this was a chance he couldn’t let go of, he took another step forward.

“It’s cute how she always is quick to cry”

“I-I-It’s not that cute at all! And I don’t cry that often either!” Kisa panicked, with tears in her eyes.

“How she gets arrogant only to have her plan end up in failure”

“I can’t fail in any way! Never do! Never!” Kisa was pushed backwards, as Mikado continued to close in on her.

Her embarrassment was rendering her logical thinking and knowledge powerless. Approaching her to a distance where their bodies could touch, he whispered into her ear.

“How she always tries to twist and turn things so that she’s not a loser in the end! She has a lot of things that make her cute, okay!?”

“...!!” Kisa tightly pressed her lips together.

Her eyes were starting to get watery, wavering uncertainty, and her body shivered ever so slightly. In response, Mikado started laughing.

“Now, Presiding Judge? Will you repeat that one more time? No, I’d like to hear those words of mine until I get bored of them!”

“I-I get it! I get it already!” Kisa sunk down onto the floor.

Her face was burning up like never before and it looked like steam was leaking out of her ears and the top of her head. At the same time, Mizuki joined them.

“Ahhh, Onee-chan? What happened? Aren’t you going to continue the trial? I’m still ready to go, you know? We can have Mikado-kun repeat his words for the rest of the day and all night~!”

“Even my body won’t last like that?!”

Mikado was already mentally fatigued in this psychological war with Kisa. If he keeps going like this, he might eventually strike down Kisa, but admitting how charming she was and seeing her reactions was equally inflicting damage on him. Right now, he was waiting for Kisa’s response.

“W-We can continue...the trial another time...”

Since she presumably was too embarrassed to look him in the eye, Kisa immediately averted her gaze again. Mizuki also reacted, as she put her hands together, she did a small jump.

“Oh, I know! A trial is fun as well, but now I’m sure it’ll be more fun if we all go out to play together! The three of us!”

“Three of us...?”

Mizuki continued, fully showing her naivety.

“Yeah! You didn’t like the fact that it was just Mikado-kun and I walking around, right? That’s why you hijacked the cameras all over the place. You wanted to go out together, right?”

“No way that Kisa would—”

Move because of such a reason— Mikado wanted to continue, but.

“...I wanted to go out together.” Kisa pouted, as she confessed.

— Ehhh?! She was just being cute, nothing else?!

Mikado received the greatest amount of damage that day.

“You were worried about what I would do with Mikado-kun, right?”

“.....Yeah.”

“But you thought you might as well just record everything to get yourself an advantage, right?”

“...Yeah.”

“Once we went to the love hotel, you got scared and abducted us, right?”

“...Yeah.” Kisa continued to nod along.

“Don’t abduct us because of that! Are you an idiot or something?!”

“Ahh, you just called me an idiot! You called *me*, the successor of the Nanjou Family, with more skill and knowledge than any other, who controls the cityfolk from the shadows, an idiot, right?!”

“Oh I sure did! Because you’re an idiot!”

“The one calling others is the bigger idiot! Idiot idiot idiot!”



Kisa started hitting Mikado on the chest. With her teary appearance and burning red to her neck in front of him, Mikado yet again received damage after watching this lovable resistance of hers.

“Ugh...”

And then, Mizuki got between them.

“Alright, then let’s go out with the three of us! Maybe we should call a car~?”

“Wait just a second, I’ll go prepare myself...” Kisa left the courtroom on wobbly feet.

Back when she greeted Mizuki and Mikado in the courtroom, she was brimming with confidence, but there were no traces of that left.

“...She really is cute.”

Walking behind her, Mikado unconsciously let out a sigh. No matter how much he was pushed into a corner, no matter how much she resisted, his affection for her would only rise every single time.

“Hmpf. Mikado-kun, do you even get it? The reason you got through today was all because of me, you know?” Mizuki pouted as she complained.

If it wasn’t for her assistance, it might have ended very dangerously today. Though Mikado didn’t know why she would even help him in the first place, he would not let this be forgotten.

“Yeah, I will definitely repay this debt. I’ll even give you a box of cakes.”

“It’s not about sweets now, Mikado-kun!” She poked at Mikado’s cheek.

“You dislike sweets? Then, maybe some clothes...”

“Stop it already~ What I want isn’t some object!”

Mikado crossed his arms and softly narrowed his eyes as he gazed at Kisa’s back.

“...I won’t let Onee-chan keep you all to herself...”

Meanwhile, Mizuki clung to his arm and muttered in a quiet voice.

Intermission: The Nanjou Sisters' Health and Physical Education Practice

Kisa, Mikado and Mizuki were now all walking around the city, together.

“Since we’re all here, let’s enjoy ourselves in the city!” emphasized Mizuki, so Mikado gave in and joined the Nanjou sisters in the karaoke room.

“Mikado... fell asleep...” Kisa grunted, as she looked over at Mikado on the sofa next to hers.

The two of them finished ordering some finger food via the touchpad and just when they arrived, he fell asleep without singing a single song. Mizuki commented beforehand that this was a place mainly used to sing songs at one’s leisure, but this was just a waste in Kisa’s eyes. At the same time, Mizuki shook her head.

“He must have been really tired after that trial with you, Onee-chan~”

“I do believe it’s because you pulled him all over the city though!”

“Just sing whatever you want, Onee-chan~ I’m sure he’ll jump up if you play death metal right into his ears!”

“The worst way to wake up, don’t you think...?”

If Mikado really was that tired, then Kisa wanted him to stay asleep after all, and gazing at his sleeping face wasn’t that much of a deficit for her.

“It looks a bit tight right now, so maybe it would be better to let him feel a bit more comfortable!” said Mizuki, as she carefully moved her

slender body over towards Mikado, opening up the collar of his shirt.

At the same time, his sleeping face softened up a bit. Mizuki then followed up with the buttons, opening one, another one and yet another one.

“Stop stop stop! What are you doing?!”

“Eh? Wouldn’t he be more comfortable if he was completely naked?”

“How would that be more comfortable?! Well, I guess it would, but I doubt he would feel comfortable being naked outside like that!”

“Ehh, Onee-chan, you’re so stubborn! Back in the ancient times, everyone was naked, so it’s fine!”

“How is this fine!? And we’re living in the modern era right now!”

“What era are we in... Morinaga era?”

“An era like that never existed!”

Meanwhile, Mizuki had already opened up Mikado’s shirt until the last one button. Seeing that, Kisa panicked, shooed her away and fixed his shirt. However, being afraid that he might wake up right that instant and end up treating her like the bad girl, coupled with the nervousness of having the boy she liked almost half naked in front of her made it harder for her to properly button it up.

“Hey. Onee-chan, don’t you want to see Mikado-kun naked?”

“Eh”

When Mizuki muttered those sweet words of temptation into her ears, Kisa’s hands stopped at once. She sat down sideways and grinned.

“The thing is... my homework for this week’s health education class is actually to ‘Research the secondary male genitals of a man close to you’, you know!?”

“That has to be a lie!”

“It’s not! We have to check if Mikado-kun is properly growing! Maybe he’s not? Maybe he hasn’t even hit puberty yet!”

“Eh... I’m pretty sure he did... His voice even seems to change...”

“Maybe he’s kept this voice ever since he was a baby!”

“That’s pretty scary!”

Kisa inspected the still sleeping Mikado. His Adam’s apple was properly developed and he had grown quite tall, so this should be proper growth... but there was no proof.

“If he actually didn’t get into that secondary growth period, then maybe you’ll have to change your ways of seducing him, right? Otherwise he could just see you as food like he did before!”

“B-But...what if he wakes up...?”

“It’ll be fine, he won’t wake up!” Mizuki said, brimming with baseless confidence.

She restarted taking off Mikado’s shirt, as well as the interior shirt. His chest was slowly being revealed to them and when she saw how different it was from a girl’s body, Kisa thought her heart almost leapt out of her chest. Mizuki then followed up by sitting at his feet, about to strip him of his pants.

“No. Mizuki... That’s too much...”

“Ehhh? But, Onee-chan, you’re interested, right?”

“I-Interested...” Kisa covered her face with her hands, but still gazed at Mikado through the gaps.

At the same time, Mizuki let out a teasing laugh.

“You’re really wussy once it comes to the real deal, Onee-chan. You can’t win against Rinka-chan like this, you know?”

And that means that I can’t win either— Mizuki seemed to be urging

Kisa on with her gaze.

“K-Keep making fun of me to a limit! I’m not a wuss or anything! I am Nanjou Kisa, the successor of the Empress of Darkness! The woman that won’t stop until the whole world is in her hands!”

Kisa sat down across from Mizuki on the floor, about to enter a new world. She slowly lifted her delicate finger and moved it towards the zipper of Mikado’s pants.

When Mikado woke up, he saw the Nanjou sisters sitting at his legs. Mizuki was excitedly watching over Kisa, as her eyes sparkled. Kisa was slowly and carefully lowering her fingers towards the zipper of his pants. It was way too surreal, making Mikado wonder if he was still dreaming. However, it didn’t turn out to be one. The younger and older sister of the Nanjou Family were hysterically leaning their bodies forward.



“What are you doing?!”

“Kyaaaaa?!”

At Mikado's shout, Kisa let out a panicked scream.

"Y-Y-You're wrong! Don't get the wrong idea!"

"How could I even get the wrong idea here...? And what kind of situation is this anyway...?"

Mikado realized that his upper body was completely naked. Both his shirt and the undershirt beneath had disappeared. This definitely was a first for Mikado. Meanwhile, Kisa frantically waved her hands at him.

"I didn't look! I didn't look yet, okay!?"

"And what were you about to look at?!"

"I told you I wasn't going to look! Don't make such a fuss or I'll kill you!"

"Ehhhhh..."

He had lost his clothes during his sleep and when he wanted to ask for the reason, he was threatened with death, leaving Mikado in absolute confusion.

"Uuuuuu...This is why I said we shouldn't...!" Kisa buried her face into the sofa, unable to bear the embarrassment.

"Ehehehe~ it's punishment for bothering me on my precious first date~" Mizuki let out a heartfelt laugh, as she clung to Mikado's shirt

Chapter 3: Battle of Fear

The chime rang to notify the end of the 4th period. In anticipation of being able to relax and take a small breather, the students' tensions disappeared at once. As Mikado took out his specially-made Kitamikado Family lunch box, Kisa called out to him.

“Hey, Mikado? How about we eat lunch toge—”

“Mikado-sama! Won't we eat lunch together? I made you a lunch box.”

Between Rinka and Kisa, who both stood up at the same time, sparks started flying. Today yet again, it was an absolute battlefield. Kisa put one hand on her waist and glared at Rinka.

“Oh my... Shizukawa-san, what might you be talking about...? Newly-transferred students are not allowed to bring in hand-made lunch boxes, you know?”

“I-I have never heard of that rule!” Rinka retorted as she tightly grasped onto the lunch box in her arms, bundled in a cute Japanese-style wrapping.

Already getting a bad premonition from this conversation, Mikado called out to them.

“Hey...”

“Mikado, don't jump in here. I'll defeat her in a second.”

“Mikado-sama, I do feel sorry about making you wait like this, but please give me another minute to strike her down.”

“Don't go and kill each other.”

Both Mikado's love and his fiance were way too noisy at times. With the two of them standing their ground against each other right now, it looked like a coiled rattlesnake and shrine maiden trying to

exorcise her.

After Rinka transferred to Sousei Academy, the love game went into even higher stages of chaos, and Mikado's calm and collected daily life went off to wherever. Truly turbulent times. A battle without virtue inside the classroom.

"Really, this truly is tiring. How shameless can you be? What justification do you have to eat lunch together with Mikado?"

"I do think that the fiance is allowed to share lunch with her future husband?"

"Ugh..." Kisa fisted her hands.

"And, what kind of just cause do you have, Nanjou-san?"

"I-I...We're classmates!"

"Classmates...?" Rinka was staring at her in puzzlement.

"Exactly! Classmates are supposed to eat lunch together to deepen their bonds, right? Not like I ever did that before though!"

"It's true that classmates would be doing that..." admitted Mikado, having realized that there was truth in her words.

At the same time, he remembered seeing Kisa always isolated from the other classmates.

"However, me being a classmate as well makes us evenly matched... and since I am his fiance, shouldn't I be the one to eat with him?" Rinka deduced that calmly, earning her an index finger pointed at her from Kisa.

"I was Mikado's classmate for a longer time! You newcomer!"

"Newcomer?! I have always...!"

Right when the verbal fight was about to heat up even further. The door of the classroom opened with great momentum, and a girl wearing the middle school division's uniform jumped inside.

“Mikado-kuuun! I’m hungryyy! Let me eat half of your lunch box!”

As carefree and energetic as ever, the younger Nanjou sister, Nanjou Mizuki jumped towards Mikado like a rabbit. Holding only a bottle filled with what looked like tea, she presumably was fully intent on feeding off Mikado’s lunch. Realizing this, Rinka furrowed her beautiful eyebrows.

“Um... Nanjou-san?”

“What is it?”

“Hmmm?”

The Nanjou sisters both gazed towards her.

“The younger sister!” Rinka quickly fixed her previous words and threw a glare at Mizuki.

“Don’t call me by my family name! Makes us feel like strangers! Just Mizuki is fine, we’re friends after all!”

“When did you two become friends again?”

“I-I don’t have any recollection of becoming friends with you...”

“Once you finish your first greeting, you’re already friends, don’t you agree?”

“Half of the people in the world are friends then!”

“Did she... hit her head...?” The demon queen Kisa was overwhelmed by her little sister.

“That makes sense... I am...friends with half of the people in this world...”

And now, even Rinka got swallowed up in Mizuki’s odd reasoning. However, she quickly shook her head and regained her senses.

“U-Um, this is the high school division’s classroom and I don’t think you should just be wandering around if you’re from the middle

school... You are stopping by almost daily now, so I was worried some problems might arise.”

“Now that you say it! If it came down to it, I would see myself forced to tell the teachers about this!”

“Are you a grade schooler or something?”

It was Kisa’s favorite trick to not be bound by such methods, but sometimes she was going a tick to far, or so Mikado thought at least. At the same time, Mizuki paid no heed to the protest of other people and just pulled on Mikado’s hand.

“I begged the teachers in the teacher’s office and got the key to the rooftop! With the clear sky that we have today, I want to eat lunch with Mikado-kun outside! Something like a picnic!”

“You really only follow your desires huh?”

“But Mikado-kun, you want to try it as well, right?”

“That is not the case.” Mikado shrugged his shoulders, but there was still a small spark of interest inside of him.

The very act of planning a picnic had never occurred before in the Kitamikado Family, and even eating out was a rare phenomenon. After being pulled around on the date with Mizuki, Mikado had started getting interested in the culture of normal citizens.

“Wait a second! If Mikado is going, then I’m coming with him! I can’t let my prey be stolen from me!”

“I-I will also join you! It’s a wife’s duty to always follow her husband!”

Kisa and Rinka quickly dashed after them.

“Ha?! I feel a big scoop in the brewing!” Kokage suddenly jolted up from her seat, camera in hand.

Faint white clouds drifted through the otherwise blue sky. The sunlight drifted down, soft and comfortable. The wind carried the

scent of flowers up to them, as the trees below them rustled in the wind. It was a tranquil scenery. Almost like you truly had organized a picnic on a green field. However... the bloodlust surrounding Mikado certainly wasn't tranquil in the slightest. Mizuki just quickly took his lunch box, directing Kisa's anger at her, while equally receiving warriness of the highest order from Rinka... A truly explosive situation.

"U-Um... Kisa-chan...? Are you not going to eat your lunch?" Kokage carefully asked.

"Of course I will. It's eat or be eaten, after all... Right?" Kisa gazed over at Kokage with the eyes of a demon.

It was a truly terrifying smile, dark miasma started to leak out behind her back.

"Awa... Awawawawa..."

Tightly gripping her camera, Kokage's lower body was shaking in fear.

"Now then. What is today's lunch I wonder~?"

Not even trying to read the mood, Mizuki just went to gleefully open Mikado's lunch box. Inside, she found chopped burdock rootstock, cooked in sugar and soy sauce, black soy beans with umami¹, bamboo shoots marinated in vinegar, a truly Japanese meal, made by the best of the best. Having deeply analyzed that, Mizuki put her hands together, her eyes sparkling with joy.

"Waaaah! So plain! Smells like old man!"

"Don't eat it if you have complaints."

"I'll still eat it~ It looks really delicious after all. No wait, even better! Mikado-kun, feed me!"

"I decline. Eat on your own."

"It's good manners to feed each other when a male and a female are out eating..."

“After researching it, I found out that you were just lying to me. Why is that?”

Mikado asked the boys of his class the day after the date, only to end up really embarrassing himself.

“What, you already found out? Then, to make up for it, you’ll let me eat all of your lunch, right?”

“After stealing my lunch box, you’re designating me as the bad guy?!”

“Wahhhh, such a plain taste! Delicious!”

Mizuki could truly earn herself the rank of being most childish, not listening to other people in the slightest. That being said, with her bright smile and stuffed cheeks after eating a big chunk of the lunch box, she looked so innocent that Mikado couldn’t get angry at her. Meanwhile, Rinka pushed her body towards Mikado.

“Though I am sure you have eaten better before, I put all my heart into this lunch box, so I would be more than delighted if you were to try it, Mikado-sama.”

“Yeah...you’re a life-saver. I was planning on buying some bread at the school store, but I wouldn’t even know how...”

Mikado had never experienced the school’s bread before, it was a lump of carbohydrates. For the successor of the Kitamikado Family, eating a meal without enough nutrition was the worst case scenario.

“Thank you very much!” Rinka put the lunch box on her thighs and opened the lid.

The contents barely didn’t flow over the corners, it was a colorful and varied Japanese lunch. Unlike Mikado’s, which was all to strengthen his bodily functions, her’s was like a flower bouquet, decorated with cleanly cut vegetables here and there, resembling the color spectrum of the well-known Chinese phoenix. It was less of a lunch box and more a piece of art. Something you definitely shouldn’t be eating so leisurely on a school’s rooftop like he was.

“You did this... Rinka...? Didn’t you work a bit too hard on it...?”
Albeit feeling bad for being so honest, Mikado couldn’t help but ask.

“I made it with all my emotions for Mikado-sama, and before I realized it...” Rinka slightly narrowed her eyes.

At the same time, Kisa’s expression turned pale as she gazed in awe upon this lunch box which clearly surpassed anything a normal high school girl could make.

“Y-Y-Y-Y-You don’t think that you’ve won against me just with this, do you?! We’re still far from done! Even a small child could make something like that!”

“I highly doubt that...”

If there was a kid like that, they would be the Mozart of the cooking world.

“Of course! And I can go even further beyond! Come and feast upon my own lunch box!” Kisa pushed her lunch box onto Mikado.

Maybe she was panicking, but she gave Mikado a clean hit in the solar plexus with the box.

“Isn’t that... a secret killing technique from a nomad family of East Asia...?!”

Kokage had completely forgotten to bring her own lunch with her, just readying the camera shutter. Unlike Mikado or Rinka, Kisa’s lunch box was decorated in a western style. An adorable, pink-colored lunch box. One that any girl would be happy to have. When she opened up the lid, the inside was revealed to be filled with meat balls and small rice balls, nuggets and rabbit-shaped apples. While munching on the food like a hamster, Mizuki pointed at it.

“Ahaha, Onee-chan, it’s so normal!”

“What do you mean normal?! This is filled with feminine power and I read about it in a magazine!”

“Ah, do you mean the ‘This year’s hot lunch boxes are these! Win

over your favorite through their stomach!’ magazine?”

“Don’t reveal my source of information!”

As Kisa’s ears started to get redder as she got flustered, Mikado couldn’t hold back a comment.

“At least your lunch box is pretty normal and cute.”

“What do you mean at least?! I have other cute parts about me, don’t I?! I’m the cutest in the entire world, right?!?”

“Nanjou-san... Saying that about yourself is a bit...” Rinka twisted her body in embarrassment, watching Kisa praise herself like that.

“I can’t help it if it’s the truth! And I’m sure that every single girl thinks of themselves as the cutest! That’s just how we work as living beings!”

“Can you not say something that would crush my dreams?!?”

No experience in love and the like, he was at an age where he saw girls as angels. But, being around the Nanjou Family, ruling in darkness, dreams would not be allowed.

“Just eat it, okay?!?”

Kisa picked up a meat ball with her fork and thrust it into Mikado’s mouth. Mikado thought of gritting his teeth to protect against it, but that could leave some lasting damage (at this speed, it could crush his teeth), so he accepted the meat ball. Just as he was taught in the Kitamikado Family, he would thoroughly chew his food 30 times, deeply savouring the meat ball. It had a soft and pleasant elasticity, with overflowing meat juices, a stimulating taste filled his mouth.

“H-How is it...?” Kisa had a complete change of attitude, as she now asked in a more timid manner.

“Delicious.”

“Right! I’m a genius at everything I do after all! I wouldn’t be surprised if you gave in to becoming my slave after tasting my

cooking! Now, swear eternal allegiance to me!”

“Just how arrogant can you get over one meat ball...?”

Or so he retorted, but watching the innocent Kisa get this happy, he couldn’t help but think of her as cute yet again. So much so that he wanted to praise her even more for it, but he had to maintain the dignified presence of a member of the Kitamikado Family.

“M-Mikado-sama! Please try some of my lunch as well!”

Panicking ever so slightly, Rinka quickly picked up some pickled rootstock with her chopsticks and pushed it towards Mikado. And it wasn’t any pickled rootstock, it had the form of a beautiful flower almost, something you could clearly not eat just because you were hungry.

“Stop it, Mikado! You’ll die if you eat that!”

“Why would I die?!”

“It totally looks like she’ll kill you and then kill herself after!”

“I won’t do something like that!”

“If anything, it looks more like Onee-chan is about to die.”

“Mikado-sama...”

Rinka still held the chopsticks towards Mikado, as her hands trembled slightly. Reflected in her eyes as she gazed straight at Mikado was expectation and anxiety, as well as resolve. Whatever the motive might be, it’s in the mindset of the Kitamikado Family to not leave anything left over that has specifically been made for them.

“I will take it.”

Mikado nodded along as he made up his mind and chomped down on the pickled rootstock. With the rather intense-smelling Japanese pepper taste, the sweet savoriness of the vinegar followed the fresh sensation of the rootstock. A beautiful harmony of flavors was born inside his head, as he calmly munched on the food in his mouth.

“Delicious.”

“I’m glad to hear that it’s to your liking...” Rinka let out a relieved sigh at Mikado’s impression, as her face started to slightly burn a faint red.

“Uggggh...”

Kisa’s grasp started to tense up, as if she was about to break her own lunch box, while glaring at Mikado.

“And why are you just sending insane killing intent at me now...?”

The density in their surroundings was so heavy that it almost made Kokage run away in fear.

“Because you’re betraying me! Munching on Shizukawa-san’s food with the mouth that has tasted mine before, what kind of loose man are you!? Yes, this is like you’re five-timing!”

“I-I still believe you, Mikado-sama! Even if there are four other women, even if you’re hiding 30, please know that you can always come home to me...!”

“What are we even talking about?!”

Kisa gazed at him with ill-intent, while Rinka looked at Mikado with a resolute (yet seemingly about to break out in tears) gaze, making this situation more and more confusing for Mikado.

“It’s time to clear things up for good! Which lunch box was better, mine or Shizukawa-san’s?!”

“T-That is what I want to know as well!”

“Come on, tell us?!”

“Which is it?!”

He was assaulted from both left and right. The enraged faces of the two beauties were closing in on Mikado fast. On one side was Kisa’s enticing scent, while Rinka’s was as soothing as ever, however not

making it any less seductive. Because they completely lost against their temper, they didn't even realize that their blouses were already hitting Mikado. Two well-endowed and voluptuous pairs of mounds, belonging to the belles of society. Mikado felt his own body temperature rise, in a panic, reciting the entire Tale of the Heike² in his head to keep his rational thinking. Thankfully, being born from the Kitamikado Family, he had strong mental fortitude, but any other normal boy would have surely collapsed from this stimulus. At the same time, Mikado decided to bring down judgement to escape from this happening.

"They're both delicious."

This answer enraged Kisa.

"There it is! The man who can't choose! The worst possible answer! You're still going to say 'Both these women are delicious, so I'll eat both of them' even after getting married, right?!"

"What are you even trying to say?!"

Rinka started to tear up.

"If you're going to eat me every day, that wouldn't be so bad..."

"Rinka?! Come back to Japanese!"

Apparently, Mikado's answer only ended up as oil for the fire. Both Kisa and Rinka jolted up, sending sparks towards each other, as Kisa crossed her arms.

"Shizukawa-san...? This means war, you know that? It'll be a battle of who can make Mikado say their food is more delicious...The loser will lose a finger."

"Losing a finger would be problematic, but... Leaving the verdict so vague does worry me a bit, so I will accept this battle!"

"Ohhh, then I'll join in as well! Looks fun!"



The first two glared at each other, as Mizuki just jumped up in joy.

As classes ended, with Mikado walking down the hallway, Kisa lined up next to him.

“...Mikado, you idiot. If you had said that mine was more delicious, it wouldn't have ended up in such a weird competition,” she said, as she puffed out her cheeks in a pout, looking as cute as ever.

She seemed to be angry about the current situation, but it was the kind of anger that Mikado wanted to see more of.

“I mean... I can't just lie about that. Both of your lunches were delicious, it was just two different directions.”

Judging and evaluating a person's skill truthfully was the way of the Kitamikado Family. No matter the situation, any favoritism was not allowed. However, Kisa just puffed out her cheeks even further.

“I'm bad at cooking, you know? So why are you forcing me into this competition!?”

“You started this by yourself even though you can't cook?! Can you not be an idiot for five seconds?!”

“It's all for the sake of wiping out Shizukawa-san!”

“The one being wiped out will be you, though!”

At the same time as he spoke those words, he immediately started having rotten thoughts such as wanting to see the crying Kisa as she lost and how she would probably be really cute.

“But, your lunch was plenty delicious as well, so are you really that bad at cooking?”

Reminiscing about the cute lunch box that Kisa had with her, it made him even hungrier.

“That was... I learned straight from the recipe and tried my best... I tried making it countless times these past three days... that was the best I could do...” Kisa yet again showed a cute expression, as she poked her fingers against each other.

—Please let me hug you already!!

Mikado forcefully quelled the urge to embrace Kisa's slender

shoulders. Even though it was all just to win in their love game, thinking that the girl he liked went through so much effort for him made Mikado happy beyond belief. He would not have a single complaint about eating her homemade breakfast each day.

However, it made sense that Kisa wouldn't be good at cooking, now that he thought about it. The Nanjou Family was part of the top five millionaire families in Japan, and the successor of such a family, Kisa, was a genuine rich lady. Ever since she was young, anything related to household and miscellaneous works, she must have had someone else do for her. Naturally, the Shizukawa Family was equally of high standing, but Rinka attended a school specifically made to educate future wives, Shirase Girls' Academy. Since she was literally educated in that regard, it made sense that Kisa could not hope to win against her.

"Anyway!" Kisa put one hand on her waist, pointing at Mikado with her index finger. "Now that it's come to this you, Mikado, have to prepare for this competition as well! From today on, you're not allowed to eat anything for an entire week! You will judge with a completely empty stomach!"

"I'll die before that!"

"Perfect! In a state of being half-dead, half-alive, everything will taste delicious to you! And then, when you eat more of my food first, Shizukawa-san's cooking will taste worse... A perfect plan!"

"I can already see the downfall of that plan! Anyway, I'm going to eat Rinka's food first then!" Mikado declared, which made Kisa start to shake her shoulders.

"H-How much of a coward can you be...!?"

"You started all of this, you know?!"

Mikado still couldn't tell if Kisa was actually really clever or not. Her grades were always on the top and she might have been called the greatest genius ever of the Nanjou Family, but the Kisa that Mikado knew was not too different to a moron.

“Well, just look forward to next week. That time, you will definitely decide to swear allegiance to me and Shizukawa-san will finally leave this school, filled with despair... A done deal!”

“That’s some crazy confidence there...”

Mikado could only gaze in puzzlement as Kisa slowly distanced herself, letting out loud laughter.

A valley deep in the mountain ranges. The beautiful singing voices of the birds ran through the trees, as the soothing sound of flowing water really let you feel the nature blooming. Just by taking a deep breath, the air could freshen up your lungs, that’s how clear it was. The only retreat left that truly felt secluded from modern Japan, with only a single hermitage to be found. Sitting across Rinka in said hermitage was the artisan that sought to reach the highest steps of cooking. Having been a cooking class instructor at Shirase Girls Academy 50 years ago, she still dominated various cooking competitions. Even now, whilst having grown old, she continues to garner immense respect from current teachers and graduates.

“The daughter of the Shizukawa Family. What do you understand about the term delicacy?”

“The taste that will make the person eating it filled with happiness, I believe.” Rinka answered, sitting on the tatami mat with her knees down.

In response, the artisan shook her head.

“Nay. Delicacy, or good flavor, is nothing but a simple sensation. It is the purification of the soul. Cleansing all the wicked falterings and hesitations, that is the peak of delicacy.”

“Cleansing the wicked...”

What Rinka imagined with those words were the foul hands of Kisa, trying to seduce and steal her beloved fiance from her, using her own beautiful figure. Though she didn’t know what kind of coaxing she had used to get Mikado this firmly in her grasp, she knew all too well that she had to save him from Kisa.

“So you came here to ask for my help, in hopes of stealing back the man you love from another woman.”

“...Yes. I want Mikado-sama, no matter what.”

“Is the enemy a girl from Shirase?”

“No. She is not a student from Shirase Girls’ Academy.”

The moment Rinka spoke those words, the artisan’s expression grew stiff.

“Then, defeat is not an option. Women from Shirase are the greatest Yamato Nadeshikos. They have been raised to gain the support of the influential men of the political world.”

“I also want to win at all costs... Sensei, please teach me.”

Rinka pressed her fingers on the tatami mat as she bowed down.

“Very well. It seems like your dedication is the real deal. Then, let’s start with sake tasting.”

“Sake tasting...?”

“In the pursuit of cooking, what do you think is the most important?”

“Devotion.” Rinka said without hesitation.

“Well said! However, I am talking strictly from the craftsman’s point of view.”

“Sense of taste, perhaps?”

The artisan gave a deep nod.

“Exactly. Just as the musician has his sense of hearing, the author his unique sense of language, the weapon of a masterful cook is their sense of taste.”

“So if I don’t have confidence in my own cooking, it will never be something truly amazing.”

Rinka was uneasy about how much sense of taste Kisa actually possessed. However, being able to win Mikado over this quickly, she could very well not underestimate her.

“There are those who possess true talent from the very beginning, but those are often conceited and the acquired sense of taste can often overcome even those called geniuses. This is that sake tasting.”

The artisan clapped her hands together, to which a middle-aged woman appeared from the back, carrying a small black dining table. On top of that, tea cups filled with a transparent liquid.

“This is...”

“This is a famous mineral water from all over Japan. I will have you survive by only using water for the next three days. This will enable you to differentiate the different tastes between the different brands, locate their different production area and judge for what kind of cooking it is the most appropriate. Actual cooking comes after that.”

“I will devote my everything to it...!”

In order to protect her precious fiance, Rinka gulped down the water.

“Hey... you look like you’re about to keel over and die... you okay?” Mikado asked Rinka inside the classroom, sitting next to her.

“I’m doing perfectly fine. Until I have properly been married to Mikado-sama, I will not die.” Or so she responded, as her voice sounded like it was about to disappear completely.

Her face was devoid of any color. She had been a rather slim-figured girl from the very beginning, but now it even made Mikado worry. However, the beauty found within her showed no signs of disappearing, despite her currently ghastly atmosphere. A quiet beauty, an appearance you could see prowling through the mist in the night streets of ancient Kyoto.

“But, you’re looking really tired there...”

“So you’ve been having such a close look at me that you’d see the differences... I feel honored... I don’t have any regrets in this world

anymore...”

“Don’t say that while looking like that! If you’re feeling sick or anything of the like, then go see a doctor!”

Rinka showed a weak smile.

“I am not sick by any means. It’s just, I haven’t eaten anything for the past five days.”

“You’ll die, you know?!”

As Mikado reacted in great shock, Kisa spoke up from the seat to his left.

“Exactly! Not eating anything is really bad for your health! Make sure to properly eat something at least three times a day, or things will end badly for you!”

“Oh look who’s talking now!”

Mikado retorted, remembering how he barely avoided the one week food ban from Kisa herself. However, Kisa paid that no mind.

“I understand that you want to become as beautiful as me, that you hate your stout self, I really do. However, a forceful diet like that will only end up as poison for your body.”

“I don’t think that Rinka is stout in any way though!”

In order to not let Kisa crush Rinka’s womanly pride, Mikado gave a quick follow-up. However, Rinka just shook her head to that.

“It is no diet or the like. To be frank, as of recently, I have been pursuing the strict path of cooking, completely secluded in a region away from civilization.”

“Pursuing?! Secluded?!”

Mikado unconsciously repeated those words you normally wouldn’t hear in modern Japan.

“Yes, that is what I am doing. I’ve been living on water these past few days...”

“Hold on, why would you only drink water in your pursuit of knowledge?”

“Because drinking water in Japan is related to learning.”

“Mikado, careful! This woman, she’s a heavy drinker! She’s planning on drinking up all the rivers in Japan!” Kisa jolted up in fear.

“No, I can’t imagine that to be her goal... right?”

“If it’s for Mikado-sama, I would gladly drink up every single river and dam in Japan!”

“Why am I inducing a water shortage?!” Mikado was at a loss.

At the same time, Mikado yet again realized how strong and especially off she could be. Most of the time, she might look like the calm and proper Yamato Nadeshiko, never showing her true emotions on the outside, but there were glimpses that Mikado could see.

“However, to my great shame, my memory didn’t prove to help me much in this situation and I couldn’t quite finish this pursuit of knowledge by only drinking water... Though it pains me to say it, I have gotten terribly hungry now...”

She even seemed to be suffering from anemia. As she pressed the palm of her hand against her forehead, her body slowly shifted to the side, about to fall off from the desk. Reacting immediately, Mikado caught her weak body and pulled her closer to him. Watching this, Kisa grew enraged.

“What are you doing in a public place like this?! It’s dangerous, so throw her out of the window right now!”

“Don’t be ridiculous. That would be 100 times more dangerous!”

“M-Mikado-sama...”

In his arms, Rinka let out a painful groan. Not a single ounce of strength was to be found in her body, it looked ready to collapse on the ground if he let go of her. Although it was arranged by his family, Mikado couldn't ignore such a dangerous condition afflicting his fiancée. Additionally, this all seemed to originate from her pure desire of wanting to create the best possible lunch for Mikado, meaning that he himself was involved in this.

"I'll be taking her to the nurse's office."

"I'm going with you then! Mikado might just get eaten up if I'm not watching!"

"As if! She's not someone from the Nanjou Family."

"But...!" Kisa grit her teeth as she formed a fist in resistance, but since the homeroom teacher entered the moment the chime rang, she could not leave now. She had no other choice but to sit back down at her own desk. In the end, only Mikado accompanied Rinka as they walked down the hallway.

"I am terribly sorry... Causing trouble for Mikado-sama like this..."

While heading towards the nurse's office, Rinka muttered up at Mikado, barely able to force out a feeble voice.

"It's okay. I do owe you a lot after all."

Keeping quiet about the entire relationship between Mikado and Kisa, while being Mikado's fiancée was not something one could expect from everyone. Hence, he felt a strong urge to do as much as he could for her. Anything unrelated to love, that is. Rinka narrowed her gaze and didn't look away from Mikado.

"It's weird... Looking at you like this... I can't help but think of Mikado-sama as—"

"Eh?"

Her pure expression, slightly tainted by mounting heat, suddenly approached Mikado.

“Delicious... You truly look like you would taste very good...”

“Rinka?!”

Out of the blue, Rinka suddenly and softly bit into Mikado’s earlobe. Paired with the soft sensation of her lips was an ardent moisture. Getting into such close contact with a girl like her, Mikado’s heartbeat accelerated. He gently pushed her away, but her gaze was as intoxicated as ever.

“Haaa... you truly look delicious... I can’t help but see you as food...”

“You’re just hungry, right?!”

“I would love to just lick you all over, like I’m always doing in my own room...”

“You’re not doing that, right?! I’ve never even been to your room before, right?!”

The sudden statement from the normally docile Rinka completely threw Mikado off-guard. She most likely must have forgotten her reason and is just acting on her empty stomach.

“Haaa... Haa... Mikado-sama... just a bit... can I just have a bit of a taste...?”

“Pull yourself together! Don’t awaken to cannibalism now!”

“You’re my fiance, so you won’t mind that much, right...?”

“Be it fiance or husband, I very much mind getting eaten!”

Being wary of Rinka’s sudden nibbling attacks, Mikado headed towards the nurse’s office.

“Honestly, I can’t see you winning here, Onee-chan.” Slurping on some cup ramen in the Nanjou Family’s kitchen, Mizuki commented in a nonchalant matter.

Naturally, that didn’t quite sit right with Kisa.

“Mizuki... do you know the word ‘restraint’...?”

“Mmm, no!”

“Figures... I should have known...”

The fear Kisa elicited throughout the entirety of Japan was second only to the current head of the Nanjou Family. And Mizuki showed no hesitation or consideration to this factm delicacy especially, was greatly lacking in her thought process.

“I mean, that time you made the lunch box for Mikado-kun was actually the first time you had ever tried to cook something, right? You’ve never even made cup ramen before.”

Yet again, Mizuki’s words stabbed Kisa right where it hurt.

“Because there was no need to make food before... Also, aren’t you the same, Mizuki?!”

“I can make lots of cup ramen types! Also, I can do poyang³, cup noodles and many more! Pretty amazing, right?”

“That’s all just cup ramen! All you have to do is pour boiling water into it!”

Mizuki raised her chin and wagged her index finger at Kisa.

“That’s a bit different~ The time you have to wait for each one is different and you have to be wary of the amount of seasoning you put in there! It’s all reliant on... what’s it called, techbig?”

“It’s called technique! Don’t act so arrogant if you don’t even know the word!” Kisa slammed both her hands down on the desk.

Completely bursting out in anger, her shoulders were heaving up and down as she breathed roughly, showing her harsh protesting.

“Mmm~ So delicious!”

However, just as always, Mizuki showed no signs of caring about that in the slightest, and just slurped on her cup ramen. Her taste was as

plebeian as always. Not to mention that the very common folk product called cup ramen shouldn't even exist in the dignified Nanjou Family residence. Mizuki herself had used her own allowance to buy them.

"But... well, you're right. Even I know very well that I cannot win against Shizukawa-san in a head-on battle."

Not winning by relying on one's own strength, but rather on tactics allowed the Nanjou Family to completely rule Japan from the shadows. So being able to see an accurate difference in individual strength was no big deal for Kisa.

"Then, what are you going to do now? Kill Rinka-chan?"

"I would be the most suspected culprit if she suddenly died, you know?! I really can't risk doing something like that. Instead..."

From a small duralumin case, she took out a carefully and thoroughly wrapped bottle. A liquid emitting a red light was inside, shaking, as Kisa moved it.

"Rinka-chan... what happened to you...?"

"I didn't kill her or anything! This is actually medicine developed by a servant of our family's business. With the biological activating substance amine, it can greatly meddle with the endocrine system in a human, awakening and intensifying sexual urges..."

"Please say it with words that I will understand it!"

"Basically, it's an aphrodisiac."

"Ohhh!" Mizuki clapped her hands together.

"...Did you finally get it? An aphrodisiac, a love potion."

"Yeah, I totally get it! It's something like nose drops, right?"

"You totally didn't get it at all! Basically, just by drinking this, you'll start feeling really horny."

“I see. It makes you want to do perverted stuff.”

“E-Exactly.”

She wasn't exactly in the wrong about that, but hearing Mizuki say it out loud without hesitation startled Kisa a bit. Mizuki did say she was going to join in their competition, but she most likely only did that for her own enjoyment. She probably had no intent of actually winning, so Kisa judged that making her an accomplice was the right choice in that regard.

“I will mix this aphrodisiac into Mikado's lunch, he will fall for my charm and say that my lunch is more delicious!”

“What if he falls for Rinka-chan's charm first?” Mizuki voiced a basic question.

She had already arrived at her second cup. In response, Kisa let out a faint snort.

“I already took that into consideration. In order to heighten the effect of the aphrodisiac, I put on perfume that will also heighten his sexual urges that day. On top of that, I'll open up the upper button of my blouse. By doing so, even Mikado won't be able to hold back from only staring at me.”

“I see, I see. Well, Rinka-chan is the more pure and proper type, so in terms of sex appeal and eroticism, Onee-chan is definitely stronger~”

“Is that really meant as praise...?”

“I'm making fun of you!”

“You are?!”

The only person who's survived the very act of speaking ill of Kisa is most likely Mizuki. Kisa put one finger on her mouth, starting to think.

“But, the problem is the question of whether this aphrodisiac actually has any effect... If it doesn't work during the real deal, I will definitely lose, so I would really like to try it before that day. It's still

in the developmental stages, so trying it out on another person is a bit...”

“Ahh, nose drops are pretty delicious!”

“...Mizuki?!”

Before Kisa realized it, her little sister had already gulped down the bottle with a bright smile.

“H-Hey, are you okay?! You drank it all at once?!”

Normally Kisa would be burning with anger at someone ruining a plan, but this time around, she really could only worry about her little sister.

“It’s okay, it was delicious after all! I wanted a small dessert... Hicc.” Mizuki said, as her eyes grew intoxicated.

Her face burned up a bright red seconds later and hot breaths escaped her pink lips.

“Haa... Somehow... this feels really good...”

“I-Is that so? Glad to hear it. But, wouldn’t it be better to just go back to your room and go to sleep for today?”

Kisa had a bad premonition and took a step back. As she did, Mizuki opened up a button on her blouse.

“Then... let’s sleep together...? Today...I feel a bit lonely...”

“I-I-I wholeheartedly decline! We’re not kids anymore, so us sleeping together would be weird, right?!” Kisa was pushed against the wall.

“It’s totally fine... I won’t do anything perverted to you... Mikado-kuuun...”

“It’s not fine at all! Also, do I look like Mikado to you?! Pull yourself together! Don’t give in to your desires! I don’t want my first time to be with my little sister—!!!”

Kisa's full-body punch had Mizuki sinking down in the kitchen.

And thus arrived the day of the handmade lunch box queen battle. The rooftop of Sousei Academy's rooftop was enwrapped in a fearfully tense atmosphere. A long table was put down like the □ character, even name plates were laid out on top of that.

"Fufufu... the perfect day for a battle like this."

"The blue sky is wonderful to look at."

"Let's try our best!"

The three people sitting on the chairs were Kisa, Rinka and Mizuki. Surrounded by them was Mikado. No place to run away. Mikado was completely backed against a figurative wall, killing intent from the girls pressing down on him from each side. While crossing her arms, Kisa glared over at Rinka.

"Shizukawa-san? You haven't forgotten about your promise of properly leaving Sousei if you lose this competition, right?"

"I never made a promise like that, did I?!"

"Have you forgotten already? Really, I shouldn't have expected anything."

"I can't forget about a promise I have never made!"

"Yes yes, every person with short-term memory loss says that."

"I-I'll make it a habit to always walk around with a voice recorder then..." Rinka grit her teeth in frustration.

While shaking furiously, Kokage carefully pushed the microphone towards Mikado.

"M-Mikado-kun... How are you feeling right now?"

"I want to go home right now."

Those were his honest feelings. At the same time, Kisa glared at

Kokage.

“You over there! We called you here as a witness, so you better have that camera ready when the moment of my victory arrives! If you dared to run away... Things will burn.”

“What exactly?! My family... Or even me?!”

“The world”

“You the demon lord?!”

“Can I go home now?! I want to spend Armageddon together with my family!” Kokage started crying.

Normally, Kokage was truly obstinate in gathering as much data as she could, but understandably today, she didn't have that leisure. After all, both Rinka's and Kisa's eyes were bloodshot, clearly serious about this battle. She knew very well that no matter who won, things would end up being troublesome. And if this ended in a draw, it would be the same as greeting death with a smile.

“Now then, I'll have you try my lunch box first. It'll be an easy win!” Kisa announced, about to open the lid of her lunch box.

However, Mikado raised his hand to stop her.

“I'll try Rinka's food first.”

“Why?! Is this favoritism?! Do you love her?!” Kisa's rage rained down on Mikado.

“Well... if that was really the case, there would have been no need for a competition like this in the first place...” Rinka's cheeks turned a faint red.

“It's not favoritism, nor do I love her. You said something about planning to make me eat so much that I wouldn't be able to enjoy hers anymore, so I'm avoiding that by eating hers first.”

“I-If you are truly fine with me... but please, be careful, it is my first

time...”

“Mikado-kun, you pervert! Criminal!”

“I’m talking about the lunch! What else would I eat?!”

Feeling his own body temperature rise, he approached the Rinka’s table. On top of her table was a multi-tiered lunch box with cherry blossoms engraved in it. In front of that, a beautifully prepared chopstick rested. The chopsticks there most likely were made of ivory. It wasn’t just a lunch box she worked hard for, it was of the quality of a traditional Japanese restaurant. Thinking to himself that it was a shame to actually open up this piece of art, he still put one hand on the lid. Once he made up his mind, what greeted him inside was a wide array of— Well, not quite a wide array.

“Polished rice?! Just polished rice?!”

Not even the pickled plum, which you would normally find to rebuild the Japanese national flag, was to be found anywhere. It was just pure white. As if it was reflecting Rinka’s pure heart. Mikado gazed at his fiance in surprise and shock, but she just returned a calm smile. Naturally, he started thinking that there would be some sort of additional side dish on the second floor of the multi-tiered box, so he lifted up the first floor. And yet again, the entire box was filled with —

“It’s polished rice agaaaaaaaaaaaaain!!”

Mikado received the greatest shock ever since the start of this century, but Rinka just put her hands together, smiling.

“Yes, it’s a polished rice box.”

“You even gave it a name! Also, this really isn’t that much of a lunch box, it is just polished rice!”

“Wahh, that looks delicious!”

“Mizuki, you really are fine with anything!”

Even Mikado had never only eaten raw polished rice as a dish before.

Items with carbohydrates didn't exist in his head. Creating a proper future through proper nutrients, that was the Kitamikado way of doing things. Meanwhile, Rinka took out a handkerchief, wiping at her eyes, as she said with a shaky voice.

"I finally managed to perfect it... After the harsh training I had to undergo, I finally managed to perfectly boil cooked rice!"

"Was boiling cooked rice so difficult before...?"

As long as Mikado's own knowledge of the times wasn't flawed, you had to put it into a rice cooker, press the switch and it would be done by itself.

Kisa snorted faintly.

"Hmpf, seems like this is it. I don't really get what you're on about there, but abandoning everything before the battle even started... how pitiful. It's just cooked white rice."

"Oh my... I am not abandoning anything though."

"What did you say...?"

Sitting to Mikado's east and west, Kisa with her darkness looming behind her and the pure Rinka. They both gazed straight at each other. Rinka raised her cute daffodil-like shoulders.

"Please take a look at this. Is this lunch box truly just cooked white rice?"

"Eh...? What do you mean?" Kisa narrowed her eyes.

At that moment, a white flash shot out close to them, with the sound of a shutter being pressed.

"This is... the legendary Shirase Academy's 'Polished Rice Box'! To think I would be able to see it with my own eyes, I am deeply moved!"

Kokage took close-up pictures of the polished rice, clearly getting excited over it like it was the scoop of the year.

“And, what’s so special about a polished rice box?” Kisa said in a condescending tone, but she clearly grew more wary of Rinka.

Incidentally, Rinka started her explanation, pure confidence filling her beautiful eyes.

“From time immemorial, it was rice that formed the body of a Japanese person, becoming their very souls. No matter how many years it worked in doing so, even as it turned into a daily nutrition, nobody has ever gotten tired of it... You could even say, it has started flowing through our genes.”

“So we Japanese are rice?!” Mizuki’s eyes went round.

Since the explanation would have been too difficult, nobody dared to retort on that. She was just left alone, staring at everyone in puzzlement.

“Gathered in this Polished Rice Box, taught only in the Shirase Girls’ Academy is ‘All kinds of cooked white rice’. Every single grain here has received all my heart and a different kind of flavor. Please, eat everything up.”

Rinka flashed a smile akin to a benevolent goddess, as she pushed the ivory chopsticks towards Mikado.

“...Very well.”

Mikado nodded along deeply, picked up a great portion of rice and brought it to his mouth. A lively impact of red pepper arrived at his brain. Following that, the taste of soy sauce sunk deep into his gums.

“That is the ‘Grain of Houou⁴’. Just like the magnificent Houou soaring through the vast skies, this grain of rice fills you with unfathomable vitality.”

“So this is... the Grain of Houou...” Mikado proceeded to carefully chew on the rice in his mouth.

What he had eaten next had the aromatic attribute of seafood. Just by putting it into his mouth, it splashed the intense flavor of Isokaze⁵ shooting the precipitous cliff of his heart inside his brain. Feeling his

soul sinking deeper into the great vast sea, it was almost as if he was toyed with by the waves.

“Ugh...this is...!”

Mikado staggered, forced to put one hand on the table to support his body. Rinka closed her eyes, as she started her explanation.

“The ‘Grain of Genbu⁶’. Symbol of the moon, a sacred beast of the four gods ruling over the four directions and seasons. Just like Genbu governs immortality, the sea acts as the source of life, wrapping up people in eternal tranquility. This grain of rice has the very nourishment of the sea packed in the highest density in every grain.”

“Ah, I know Genbu! That’s the tortoise god, right!? The one that Momotaro⁷ rode on, right?” Mizuki raised her voice in a happy manner.

Though Mikado wanted to retort that the one riding on the tortoise’s back was actually Urashima Taro⁸, but the explanation would turn out too long, so he gave up. Following after those were the Grain of Seiryuu⁹, Grain of Suzaku¹⁰, Grain of Byakko¹¹, Grain of Kirin¹², Grain of Shishi¹³, Grain of the Mole, Grain of the Panda and the Grain of the Koala. Every single one of those reached the peaks of delicacy, but for some reason the Grain of the Koala tasted like chocolate.

“Koala’s mar¹⁴—”

“Grain of the Koala, it is!”

Rinka quickly spoke between Mikado’s sentence to avoid any misunderstanding. Either way, it was a flood of different tastes. No matter how much he ate, it didn’t fill him up nearly enough. Rather, the more he ate, the more voracious his hunger for more was, enabling him to feel even his own stomach with all the different grains of rice in it. Though it might be simple, it was equally complicated, the ultimate calculated food— that is the Polished Rice Box. After Mikado was visibly satisfied with his lunch, Rinka put both her hands together, as if she was praying.

“Mikado-sama, if I may ask for your impressions.”

“Yeah...”

—This was really hard to eat! At least let me fill my belly to the fullest! Put it into rice balls!

That was the honest impression he wanted to scream out, but he would end up hurting Rinka in the process, so he kept those to himself. This being her, she might just bite her own tongue in shame to quickly kill herself.

“It’s delicious!” Mikado put up his thumb.

That wasn’t a lie by any means. At the same time, Rinka’s expression blossomed like a flower.

“Thank you very much! It seems as if shortening my life span proved to be worthy here!”

“Please don’t do that! You don’t have to force yourself that much.”

Causing her to fast to the extent of nearly collapsing because of one lunch box weighed heavily on Mikado’s heart. Before Rinka was his fiance, she was also his classmate and a childhood friend he shared many memories with.

“Oh how kind your words are... Mikado-sama truly is the ideal husband...” Rinka sunk deeper into the chair as she gazed at Mikado in admiration.

Meanwhile, Mizuki formed a fist with her hands.

“Ohh, this is bad! Rinka-chan is already 100 points ahead of us! This is going pretty badly for Onee-chan! How will she make up for this?!”

“What did you even come here for?! Live broadcasting?! You are participating as well, aren’t you?!”

“I came here to enjoy myself! As long as I’m having fun, it’s all okay!”

“You are always like this, aren’t you...? Yes, I perfectly understand it

now...” Kisa muttered, clearly tired of her little sister’s carefreeness.

She immediately fixed her posture, as she raised her chin, glaring down at Rinka.

“However, this competition is my win!”

“Aren’t you being a bit too fast?! You haven’t even opened up your lunch box, yet!”

“I don’t have to open it to know... The second where Mikado didn’t go down in the ring during your turn, it was my victory!”

“Ugh.... Then why didn’t I manage to make Mikado-sama go down in the ring?!”

As another harsh (?) battle of words broke out, Mikado found himself unable to grasp the contents anymore.

“Hold on? What kind of competition is this? It sounds like I’m turning into the adversary here, but I’m supposed to be the referee, right? And what do you mean by go down?”

“It’s a figure of speech!”

“Do you mean figure of speech? Why are you panicking like that? You’re planning something, right?”

“What harsh accusations. Was there ever a time when I was plotting something?”

“I literally only remember times where that was the case...”

Though to be fair, Mikado had mentally prepared himself for that. There is no way that Kisa would just fight fair and square, especially during this cooking contest. She must be planning on tricking either Mikado himself or Rinka. Whilst being wary of her movements, he watched over Kisa as she opened up her own lunch box. At first glance, it looked like your normal western-style lunch box. With overflowing confidence, she pushed it towards Mikado.

“The name of this box is... ‘Aphrodisiac Box’!”

“I declare rule infringement! Disqualification! Rinka is the winner of this competition!”

“I did it...! With this, I will be Mikado-sama’s personal chef...!”

As Rinka downgraded herself from fiance, tears of joy ran down her cheeks.

“What about me?! Why did I never get a turn?!” Mizuki pointed at herself as she protested.

“Congratulations, Rinka-san!” Kokage was busy enthusiastically taking pictures of the winner.

Being left all alone like that, Kisa slammed her slender hands on the desk.

“How is this a rule infringement?! You haven’t even tried it yet, have you?!”

“As if I would! The second you asked me to eat poisonous food, I was done with it!”

“It’s not poison! Nor is it something illegal! Clinical experiments haven’t gone far enough yet, so it’s still a medicine in the experimental stage!”

“You were planning on using me as a guinea pig?!”

Fear ran down Mikado’s spine. He thus decided to never accept any food or drinks from Kisa ever again.

“Again, there is no harm in this. Mizuki already tested it.”

“You used your little sister as one?!”

Mikado was terrified at the Nanjou Family yet again. He had to pull Kisa towards the light at all costs. Meanwhile, Mizuki lightly waved her hand.

“That’s not it~ I drank it out of my own free will because it sounded interesting~”

“I swear, you’ll die one day while thinking it’s interesting...”

Though it was proven that the older sister was innocent, Mikado still realized that the darkness of the Nanjou Family ran deep. Kisa put both her hands on her hips, as she explained the details.

“This aphrodisiac is developed by an industry under the wings of the Nanjou Family. It induces a desire for the opposite sex that the person has the most contact with, heightening the cardinal desire of procreation.”

“That means that once Mikado-kun drinks this, he will want to do perverted stuff with me, right? Kyaaa~” Mizuki wrapped both her arms around her body.

“No! He will want to do it... with me!”

“Why? I’m always clinging to Mikado-kun, right?”

“I didn’t mean the one with most physical contact. Basically, the amount of time he’s spent with that person is the most important. And the closest member of the opposite sex is me.” Kisa gave a confident snort.

To that, Mizuki puffed out her cheeks.

“Ehh? So it’ll be his mother?”

“Can you not bring out such disgusting thoughts!? There is no way he would see her as a member of the opposite sex!” Kisa shivered in fear.

“What... fearful medicine... Mikado-sama is in danger...”

“Well, I’m not going to eat any of that.” Mikado declared calmly, to which Kisa’s eyes opened into big round circles.

“W-Why?! Why won’t you eat the lunch box that I put both my heart and soul into while making it?! Are you the devil?!”

“Because you put an aphrodisiac in there! Who would step onto a landmine while knowing it’s there?!”

“Just a bit! Just a single bite is fine! You’ll get addicted after!”

“I don’t want to be addicted though!”

Kisa walked around the table to push her lunch box towards Mikado, who was busy averting his face in order to not accidentally eat anything. As he did, the delicious smell emitted from it tickled his nose, making it tougher on his still empty stomach, seeing that the Polished Rice Box didn’t fill him up in the slightest. Mikado found himself wavering for but a second and Kisa realized that, as she showed a clever smirk.

“...Is this really fine? If you’re saying that you won’t eat it just because of that, you can’t call yourself a human worthy of the Kitamikado Family title, right?”

“What...?” Mikado furrowed his brows in disbelief.

Holding the pride of belonging to the Kitamikado Family, the successor could not ignore a blatant provocation like that.

“I know of one of the rules of the Kitamikado Family. ‘Always finish eating everything prepared for you’, right? At parties, your family would never leave any food.”

“That is true, but... With food that has an aphrodisiac in it...” Mikado was trying to find an excuse.

“I swear right here, right now! Inside this lunch box, there is only one piece of food with aphrodisiac in it! And, in order to grant Mikado some compensation for agreeing with the risks, I advocate for an aphrodisiac russian roulette!”

“Aphrodisiac russian roulette...?” Mikado asked for confirmation, as he felt a chance for victory.

Kisa crossed her arms behind her back and walked around Mikado as she announced.

“In this russian roulette, Mikado and I will be eating away at this lunch box. Once one of us has eaten a part and hasn’t hit the aphrodisiac, we can decide on the type of food the other person has

to eat next.”

“I see... Evading the food with the highest possibility of having the aphrodisiac in it, while pushing the higher risks on the other person.”

Next to Mikado, Kisa let out a faint giggle.

“Exactly. And, depending on your efficiency and methods while capturing the various territories of the lunch box, should the last piece of food left over be the one with the aphrodisiac in it, you can feed it to the other person.”

“But won’t you have an overwhelming advantage? You were the one who put the aphrodisiac in there, right?”

“No, the one who put it in was Mizuki. Right?”

Mizuki raised her hand towards Kisa’s question.

“Yep! I was the one who put the aphrodisiac in there...!”

“You don’t have to say it like we’re on stage!” Kisa retorted.

“So... it’ll be a fifty-fifty...”

“Indeed. As a special treat, I don’t mind if you take the first bite, Mikado. It’s an even number of pieces of food in there, so the last turn will belong to me.”

Mikado ran his eyes over the lunch box to verify Kisa’s statement.

“This kind of battle is way too dangerous!” Rinka spoke up.

“Don’t stop me. As a man, there are things that I have to do no matter what.”

“Mikado-sama...”

Mikado tightly pursing his lips, turned towards Rinka, reassuring her. It’s true that the stakes were high, as were the risks, but so was the possible reward. Just as Kisa was the member of the opposite sex that Mikado had the most contact with, the same could be said about Kisa

with Mikado himself. Meaning that if he managed to have Kisa eat the aphrodisiac, he might win the love game right here.

“Then... let’s start. Today is the day you will become my slave,” said Mikado as he grabbed the chopsticks.

At the same time, Kisa picked up the lunch box.

“Fufu... Not bad. However, you will be the slave.”

The two of them glared at each other. The pressure was so hefty it almost boiled their skin. The start of the battle— Didn’t happen immediately, because Mizuki spoke up as if she had remembered something.

“Ahh! I did tell Onee-chan about the taste, but not Mikado-kun, so that’s not very fair, so you’ll get a hint. This aphrodisiac is actually pretty bitter, you know?”

“.....!”

With this new piece of information, Mikado yet again ran his bloodshot eyes over the lunch box. Scrambled eggs, macaroni salad and rice balls, those were the types of food that would be hard to put an aphrodisiac in. Since they aren’t using any bitter tasting ingredients, it would be hard to hide the bitter taste in there, meaning that they were the safest choices. Picking the rice balls, Mikado put one to his mouth. Because of Rinka’s rice grain cooking, he was more than hungry and not at all fed up with rice yet.

“Mikado-sama, are you okay...?”

“And? Is something in there~?”

Rinka fearfully asked as she watched over Mikado, while Mizuki gazed at him, excited beyond belief. No bitter taste in there. Neither were there any signs of a sped-up pulse or a higher body temperature.

“...Seems like it wasn’t in there.”

Mikado announced the result of his deduction, to which Rinka

showed a relieved sigh, and Kisa a click of her tongue. It seemed to have been the right choice, but he couldn't relax just yet. Because he was so nervous and the rice balls being rather salty, he felt his throat slowly drying up.

"Here, some tea."

"Thanks a bunch."

Kisa handed Mikado some green tea from a water bottle, which Mikado gulped down at once. The refined taste of the green tea completely reset the sense of taste that had been dulled after eating all those grains before.

"Next... I get to decide on what you have to eat, right?"

"Y-Yes..." Kisa put herself on guard.

If Mikado managed to immediately guess the food with the aphrodisiac in it, it would spell Kisa's defeat. Meaning that this might just be one of the most important decisions of his entire life.

— Food that would make it easy to hide the bitter taste...

Mikado looked over the lunch box again. Penne pasta with arrabiata sauce, stir-fried shrimps in chili sauce, the menus around the celery salad were easy to hide the aphrodisiac in. A $\frac{1}{3}$ chance to hit the aphrodisiac. In order to heighten that chance even further, Mikado tried asking something.

"...Kisa, do you like celery?"

"Not really, no. It's really bitter after all." Kisa unconsciously stiffened her cheeks.

Watching that reaction, Mikado assured himself of his victory. You wouldn't normally use food that you don't like, even if it wasn't your own lunch box. So, for what reason would she use celery then?

"Alright. You eat the celery salad."

"Just when I said I didn't like it because it's bitter?! Are you a

sadist?!”

“I most certainly am not. This is just for the sake of the competition.”

Whilst hesitating greatly, Kisa carried the celery salad to her mouth.

“Uuu... So bitter...”

Watching her munch on celery with tears building up in her eyes, Mikado couldn't help yet again realizing how lovable she was. He felt the sudden urge to force her to eat more bitter food to see more of that reaction. After she more or less safely finished completely gulping down the celery, Kisa pressed on her mouth and let out a deep sigh. Maybe it was because of her pride, but she didn't grab a sip of the tea she had offered Mikado before. Watching over Kisa and observing no reaction or alteration in her behaviour, Mikado saw nothing unusual. No signs of being influenced by the aphrodisiac. No flushed cheeks, or roughened breathing. At the same, Kisa wiped off her mouth with a handkerchief.

“...Next it's my turn to decide! I'll strike you down with this one move, Mikado!” She pointed at him.

“What food will it be?”

“The shrimps!”

No hesitation. Rather, she seemed overly confident, which made Mikado put up his guard. Receiving different chopsticks from Kisa, he pushed the shrimps into his mouth, trying his best to carefully guess the taste. He didn't taste anything bitter there. The stimulating spice, sweet taste of the vegetables, as well as the soft and spongy sensation of the shrimp perfectly fit together inside Mikado's mouth. He put a bit of distance between himself and Kisa to monitor his own bodily functions. There was no difference after having eaten the shrimps, no weird sensation filled his body. He was safe.

In order to soothe his tongue, slightly burning up because of the spice, he accepted the cup that Kisa handed towards him. If this tongue was perturbed by some outside force, it would make it more difficult to make out the aphrodisiac in case he had caught it.

“Now then... Next round will be the final one.”

“I-It won’t be the end! The battle has just started!”

Mikado approached Kisa with one step, to which she equally took one back.

“You should understand it as well. The only food left that could hide the taste of the aphrodisiac is the penne with arrabiata sauce. It’s checkmate. All I have to do is make you eat the penne.”

“I-I won’t eat it! No matter what you say, I will never!” Kisa tightly pursed her lips, shaking her head.

Her eyes were opened widely, enabling Mikado to see his own reflection in there. She was clearly afraid.

— I want to see more of her, when she’s losing her cool...

Mikado felt himself awaken to a weird desire, appearing from the depths of his heart. For some reason, Kisa looked many times cuter than usual. He wanted to push her into a corner, embarrass her. He wanted her to grow flustered, panicky and anguished. Eventually, he was unable to hold back that desire.

“Come here for a bit.”

“Kya?!”

Mikado pulled Kisa towards him and had her sit on his lap. The soft, fluffy sensation of thighs, the seductive scent of her perfume, the smell of a girl, everything played with Mikado’s rational thinking.

“R-Really... Mikado, you’re way too bold...” Kisa put a finger on the corner of her mouth, turning her face down. Her cheeks were burning deep red.

“Mikado-sama?! What are you doing?!” Rinka was clearly in shock.

“This is the perfect chaaaaance!”

Kokage readied her camera at lighting speed, but Kisa broke the lens

of that with a single wave of her hand. It looked like she threw something, but Mikado couldn't make out what it was.

"If you're saying you won't eat it yourself, then I have to feed you, right? I won't hear any complaints."

"W-Wait... Just a bit... I have to mentally prepare myself..."

"No can do. Open up your mouth."

Mikado softly put his index finger on Kisa's mouth, her body twitched in response. Her expression was colored in embarrassment and her reproachful gaze and watery eyes were stimulating Mikado's desire to the fullest. His heartbeat accelerated and the blood in his body started to boil.

"Huuuuuh...? Weird, you shouldn't have eaten it yet..." Mizuki commented, clearly puzzled by this development.

Through those words, Mikado managed to faintly return back to his senses.

— Weird. Something is definitely weird with me today.

He forcefully made his thoughts start turning, albeit not all too successfully. The normal Mikado would not do something assertive like this. On top of that, his body was burning up and his excessive desire towards Kisa was rising. He was clearly in an unnatural state. As if he had just eaten an aphrodisiac... Thus, Mikado arrived at a very fearful conclusion.

Kisa had sworn that 'Inside this lunch box, there is only one piece of food with aphrodisiac in it'. However, she didn't say anything about what was outside the box. And, for a while now, she had been forcing Mikado to eat food that was very thick in taste, unconsciously forcing him to take sips of the tea she handed him.

— So that's what it is!

Mikado finally grasped the situation. She had Mikado get the wrong idea about the aphrodisiac being somewhere in the lunch box, it had actually been put into the tea. In order to not make Mikado

suspicious of it, she started this aphrodisiac russian roulette. It wasn't even a competition, it was all just pretense to deceive Mikado. However, that ruse was over now. The successor of the Kitamikado Family would not allow himself to get played around with like that.

“...If you don't want to eat it that badly, then I'll give up on that. Instead, you'll be drinking three full cups of the tea you've been handing me, okay?”

“Eh-” Kisa was at a loss for words.

Looking at this reaction, there was no mistaking it.

“You've also been eating food with a strong flavor, right? How about you go freshen up that dried-up throat?” Mikado snorted in arrogance.

His rational thinking had already returned.

“I-I'm perfectly fine! I'm doing as good as ever! I don't feel like drinking some tea right now!” Kisa desperately shook her head.

Even her panicking mannerisms were adorable.

“Then... it seems like I can only help by giving it to you by mouth.”

“Hya?! No no no no! You definitely can't! It's still too early for that!”

“Just calm down.”

Mikado took a deep gulp from the cup with the aphrodisiac in it and softly lifted up Kisa's chin with his fingers. He knew himself that he shouldn't do this, but he was unable to stop now. His rational thinking hadn't returned completely.

“Mikado-sama, you can't! That is way too effective against a maiden like her!”

“Wheeeew! Something amazing is happening with Mikado-kun!”

“Wawawawa... Camera... I have to get the camera...”

Rinka, Mizuki and even Kokage raised their voices, all showing different reactions, but none of their voices reached Mikado's ears. Instead, he just held onto the cup, embracing Kisa.

“My first kiss has to be more romantic than thiiiiiiiis!”

Kisa blew away Mikado at full force. He fell down from the chair and the cup flew into the air. It ended up falling straight down onto the courtyard, followed by a shriek.

“Did we... just mess up terribly?” Mizuki muttered.

“Someone is down there...” Rinka's expression was growing more cloudy.

Mikado and the others carefully gazed down from the rooftop.

“Harukoooooooo! Harukoooooooo! I love youuuuuuuu!”

The headmaster ended up completely drenched, clinging to a thick tree trunk as he screamed. He rubbed his cheek against the bark, raining down a storm of kisses, being so overly intimate that it could make you jealous.

“He doesn't seem to be hurt, but things seem to be troublesome in a different kind of way!”

“Wahh, the headmaster is so happy! I'm glad for him!”

“I'm... not really sure what to think of this...”

In order to not be found out, Mikado and the others quickly left the rooftop.

And then, the lunch break of the following day.

“In the end, who won that lunch box battle yesterday!? It was me, right?!”

The second Mikado closed up his workbook on his desk, Kisa let out a confident declaration of victory.

“...No? Definitely not.” Mikado returned coldly.

“Why?! It was delicious, right?! So delicious that you couldn’t help but fall in love with me, right?!”

“The taste was good, but... because of the risk of there being an aphrodisiac in there, I couldn’t enjoy the taste at all, so -200 points.” Mikado gave a harsh evaluation.

“Ugh...Because of something like that...!” Kisa grit her teeth.

“S-So, was I the one that won...?” Rinka asked, clearly getting her hopes up.

Rinka was truly working hard to please Mikado, so he wanted to give as good an evaluation as possible, but...

“It was delicious, but the amount wasn’t nearly enough...”

“I’m very sorry! Next time, I will make more rice grains!”

“I told you to up the amount! Don’t add more types of grains!”

“Kyaaa! Mikado-sama got angry at me... Ahh, but... that didn’t feel too bad...” Rinka’s face went red, as she twisted her body.

At the same time, Kisa glared at Mikado.

“Then, who was the winner!? You’re not saying it was a draw, right?!”

“...Hmmm, I think I might just go with Mizuki.”

“I did it~!”

Having entered the classroom the second the chime rang to signal the start of the lunch break, Mizuki pulled a winning pose. The middle school division was actually quite a ways from the high school division, so her being here with such timing was more than suspicious, but Mikado gave up on retorting there.

“Mizuki?! Why?! She just made a sandwich, right?! She didn’t even

cut off the bread crust!” Kisa screamed in protest.

“Because it was too much of a pain~!” said Mizuki, pulling a V-sign.

“Look! She’s the worst as a cook!”

“Says the person that put an aphrodisiac in their food!”

“In food there are preservatives as well! It’s the same!”

“It’s not!”

“There’s this thing called medicinal cooking, right?! By putting medicine in the food, it acts as a treatment to help the body’s recovery! I made this food while thinking of Mikado, okay!?”

“Aphrodisiacs aren’t medicine for some sickness though!” Mikado would not be deceived like that.

“Well... it was the best choice. There were no weird drugs in her sandwich and I was full after eating it. The reason I didn’t have to starve yesterday afternoon is because of her sandwich.” Mikado said, giving his evaluation, as well as his appreciation.

Since he knew about the cooking contest, Mikado didn’t bring a lunch box with him. He did have some high expectations in the beginning, but those were betrayed completely.

“Hey hey, I won by the process of elimination, right?” Mizuki jumped in Mikado’s arms as she asked.

Mikado nodded along.

“Sorry, but this is what it boils down to.”

“I won because of a compromise! I’m the compromise woman for Mikado-kun! Yay!” Mizuki jumped up in joy.

“Are you really that happy about it...?” Kisa’s expression was openly showing her bewilderment.

“Can’t help it then. This time, I feel like I lost myself a bit. It’s always

the most important to think about the person you're making the food for..." Rinka showed a weird kind of consent.

However, that wasn't the same for Kisa. She was the type that hated losing to begin with.

"N-Next time! Next time for sure, I'll definitely have Mikado say that my food is the most delicious! I'll make sure that you definitely won't find the aphrodisiac! So you better prepare yourself!"

"How about we start with not putting any aphrodisiac in there?!"

Naturally, Mikado was happy about receiving more of Kisa's handmade food, but that would most likely end in another war. So he wasn't that delighted to be truly look forward to it.

1 fish, meat, and vegetables stewed in a thick, sweet sauce of soy sauce, sugar and mirin

2 Epic account compiled before 1330, telling of the battles between the Taira clan and Minamoto clan. Very lengthy.

3 Some kind of yakisoba dish

4 Chinese phoenix

5 Destroyer of the Imperial Japanese Navy

6 Black Tortoise, one of the four guardian beasts of Japan, and also one of the four gods in Chinese lore who ruled over the north.

7 Popular hero of Japanese folklore, called 'Peach Boy'

8 Protagonist of a Japanese fairy tale. A fisherman riding on the back of a tortoise.

9 Azure Dragon, another one of the four guardian beasts who ruled over the eastern area

10 Bird-shaped goddess of fire, similar to a phoenix. Also a guardian beast. Rules over the south.

11 White Tiger, last of the guardian beasts. Ruler of the west. +

12 A gold dragon. Not an actual guardian deity with a region to protect, but lives in the middle region of Japan.

13 Left-hand guardian dog at a Shinto Shrine

14 Most likely a reference to 'Koala's March', a bite-sized cookie snack made by Lotte. Either that or he's referencing koala poop.

Chapter 4: Entering Priesthood

At this rate, it will end up in failure—or so Mikado thought to himself.

“Good morning. I have come to greet you today. I thought it would be a good idea to walk to school together like other couples would.”

Monday morning. As a pleasant breeze flew past the entrance of the Kitamikado Family’s residence, Rinka gracefully appeared. Her bright skin was almost transparent and uniform was clean and proper, her glittering black hair perfectly arranged. No matter where one looked, she was the perfect Yamato Nadeshiko who showed Mikado a smile overflowing with affection for him.

“Well... I think that going there separately would be better...”

It would lessen the risk of any possible ruckus being caused by their classmates. Gathering rumours about oneself was a thing disliked in the Kitamikado Family. But Mikado’s personal reason was that he wanted to avoid lowering Kisa’s affection for him in any shape or form. However, Mikado’s parents, who had just finished their breakfast, appeared behind his back.

“Oh my... How wonderful. Coming to greet one’s future husband this early in the morning, the perfect example of a Kitamikado Family wife. This will surely keep the swarm of insects in check.” said Mikado’s mother, hiding half of her mouth with the palm of her hand as she let out a faint giggle.

“I’m glad to see that you have gotten this close. Despite being a fiancée, but still cultivating one’s love for each other is a wonderful thing to see. If it were to grow too cultivated, I wouldn’t mind pushing forward the marriage either.” commented the current head of the Kitamikado Family, his arms crossed.

The mother nodded along.

“Indeed. Guaranteeing a healthy successor can never be done too

early. We will take care of the school, so you two can just enjoy yourselves to your heart's content. I won't allow any birth control though~”

Rinka gave a deep bow.

“Yes... I am eternally grateful for these kind words! I will do my best to create healthy and energetic children with Mikado-sama!”

“Aren't you all a bit too blatant?!” Mikado complained, as he felt immense pressure from his parents and fiancée.

Those calling themselves the son of the Kitamikado Family cannot break down from this sort of pressure by any means, but letting things get any more serious than this would certainly not be a good policy. If he drove Rinka away right here, he would be thoroughly questioned by his parents and he would have to worry about them finding out about his love game with Kisa. However, the biggest problem of them all was—

“Mikado-sama... Did I... bother you with this...?”

Rinka gazed up at Mikado, her eyes filled with anxiety, afflicting him with a harsh desire to not hurt her more than necessary.

“...It wasn't a bother. I was just a bit surprised.”

Mikado let out a sigh inside his chest and sat inside the white limousine provided by the Shizukawa Family. With the sound of the engine softly revving up, the limousine slowly started to accelerate. The small space that Mikado and Rinka were in was completely sheltered from the driver in the front. Like a small and secret room for them. Mikado tried his best to not be alone with her, but this was a special situation he couldn't avoid. Rinka rested her slender body against Mikado and softly whispered as her cheeks grew more redder.

“We really have to respond to their expectations. I wonder what kind of baby will be born from the two of us...?”

“W-Who knows...? I can't imagine...”

Naturally, Mikado was imagining it with a heavy mind. But the

problem was less the actual baby, and more the process of making it. No matter how he was raised, he still was a healthy boy in his teens. Being involved in such talk this early in the morning, with a beauty like Rinka next to him, not growing conscious of her was close to impossible. Not to mention the fact that she was pressing her knees against his as she sat next to him. Sitting so close to the perfectly healthy and beautifully balanced body of Rinka, Mikado would grow flustered whether he wanted to or not. Even more so as Rinka pulled on his sleeve, softly whispering to him.

“I... imagine it, every evening. Doing it with Mikado-sama.”

“Every evening?!”

With this bold confession, Mikado could feel every single ounce of his blood burning fiercely. Thinking about what his imaginary self was doing in this pure girl's fantasies, his reasoning began to crumble. However, he barely managed to survive through that long, oh so long bittersweet experience. The limousine arrived at Sousei Academy where Mikado immediately separated from Rinka as if running away. If he were to suffer any more passionate affection from his fiancée like that, something bad might very well happen. However, right when he thought he had gotten away from the dangerous landmine, another assailant appeared.

“Mikado-kuuuuuuuun! Good morning~! You're as cool as ever!”

Waving her student bag at him, Mizuki dashed at full speed and jumped into Mikado's arms. Because of the suddenness, Mikado was too slow to react as Mizuki clung to his head, her slender waist glued to his chest. As a result, her modest chest was pressing against his mouth and nose.

“Mugh?!”

Feeling them this close, her breasts had more volume than they originally looked to have. There was also a sweet odor leaking from them which played with his reasoning.

“What's wrong~? You seem to be in real pain for some reason.”

“Because you are choking him! Get away from Mikado-sama this instant!” Rinka tried to peel Mizuki off.

However, Mizuki showed no signs of giving up on her pole position.

“No can do~ It’s a special service for him. Mikado-kun, how is it? These are the breasts Onee-chan had when she was 14~ I even put on the same bra as her~”

Having those teasing words whispered into his ear, Mikado faltered. His thoughts acted faster than his reason, and he imagined what it would have been like to be embraced by Kisa like this.

“I believe that things will get out of hand soon.”

The home office of the current head of the Kitamikado Family. Mikado stood in front of his father with a heavy heart and the intention of asking him for advice. His office was in perfect Japanese manner, filled with tatami mats, and displayed on the wall was the hanging scroll of a white dragon. Inside this room, completely sheltered from the outside and loud sounds, a strong sense of pressure bore down on Mikado.

“What do you mean by ‘out of hand’?” asked the head, not even raising a single eyebrow.

Taking a deep breath, Mikado started explaining his previous words.

“I feel like my heart has started to grow weaker as of recently. I am influenced by the words and actions of those around me, my thoughts and feelings move in an odd direction, so to speak. It feels like I’m starting to sway back and forth.”

The head lifted up his chin with a stern expression.

“Hm...I see. Your sexual desires have gotten stronger, and you’re troubled by that.”

“Why were you able to perfectly pinpoint my worries like that?!”

Mikado cursed, as he had hoped to keep the actual problem as hazy as possible.

“Being at that age, it is a wall every boy has to eventually overcome. Naturally, that involves myself as well, as I was your age before. Yes, back then I—”

“It’s okay! I don’t need to hear any of that, Father!”

The family head however just shook his head.

“Don’t panic like that. For now, let’s start with my fiance back then... Let’s start by calling your mother ‘The Goddess saving my destiny’.”

“We don’t have to start! Take that personal information to your grave, will you?!”

Mikado tried his hardest to stop his own father, who was weirdly eager. If he were to hear too much information about their youth, it would only make their relationship as a family more awkward.

The head let out a sigh.

“No helping it then. About the method to strengthen your heart... to not fall to any temptations... is easy. Just reduce your stress with the young Shizukawa woman.”

“Excuse me?!”

“As long as it is your fiance, there is no problem, right? Don’t worry, we will follow up and take care of things on our end.”

“That’s not what I meant... I want to strengthen my heart so that it doesn’t even come to that...”

With his current endurance, it wouldn’t take long for him to lose the love game. If he didn’t raise up his own defence soon, there would be no future for him. That is the deadly premonition that constantly weighed down on Mikado’s heart. It wasn’t just a problem like his desires not allowing him to study or the like. It was on a way more important level.

“Then, entering priesthood.”

“Entering priesthood?!”

“Indeed. There is a cloister that the Kitamikado Family has good relations with. They accept children of the political world, giving them a place to find themselves and regain their purity. If you manage to pass through their harsh training, you will surely be able to find results.”

“It’s true that it might bear results... but going that far is a bit...”

Mikado only felt the need to raise his own durability, not any desire to become a monk. Once he managed to bring down Kisa, he was planning on enjoying his youth together with her. Entering priesthood would most likely bring about more problems than solutions.

“I only suggested it to you as a possible solution. It’s your responsibility to pick the right path.”

“...I understand. For now, I’ll hold off on that.”

Mikado bowed to his father and left his office behind him.

As Mikado was dwelling in his own thoughts in his classroom at Sousei Academy, Kisa called out to him with a suspicious gaze.

“Mikado, what’s wrong with you recently? You’re spacing out all the time. Did your IQ drop?”

“Of course not. I was just thinking about some stuff.”

Mikado was still busy calculating the merits and demerits of his father’s advice. Whilst thinking about other possible methods to make his heart more resistant, he was unable to think of anything.

Kisa showed him a cheerful smile.

“Dwelling on it on your own for too long isn’t good, so let me help you, okay? Let’s both think about ways to efficiently lower the human population on this earth.”

“I never once thought about that, and probably never will!”

“Then what is it!? Just spit it out! So cheeky of you!” Kisa slapped

her hand on Mikado's desk.

"Then... Well, you know. Kisa... what do you think about entering priesthood?"

"You can't go on dates, and you won't be able to eat anything delicious anymore. It's basically a graveyard."

"Thank you for your precious opinion."

Cut in two with a single strike, Kisa's words almost sounded like she had prejudices against it.

"Still... Not being able to go on dates... That really hurts..." Mikado muttered to himself, and Kisa didn't miss that.

"Yeah, I understand you. You want to go on a date with me so badly that you can barely hold yourself back, right?"

"...That's not the case."

Naturally, she hit the bulls-eye perfectly. If it didn't break the rules, Mikado would have been ready to use half of his family's fortune to give her the greatest date of all time. At the same time, Kisa's cheeks burned red.

"At least give affirmation there! That makes it seem like I'm excessively self-conscious!"

"Because you are." Mikado shrugged.

"It's not excessive! You actually wanted to take a walk with me down a sandy beach, with rows of trees lining both sides, right? Then feeding each other parfait at a cafe like lovers, right?"

"Your ideas are pretty cute alright..."

"T-They aren't cute at all! Absolutely not! Are you making fun of me?!"

Yet again Kisa slammed her hands down onto the desk, throwing a sharp gaze at Mikado like she was about to slap him. Seeing her

eyelashes shake at close range and her pearly teeth biting into her lips, that alone was enough to throw Mikado's heart into chaos. He wanted to take her by the hand, and take her out on a date. Throw out the love game that would decide the fate of Japan and embrace her body to his heart's content.

—Yeah, this really is getting out of hand.

Kitamikado Mikado decided to enter priesthood right then and there.

Thus, he was sitting in the main temple building removed from any worldly wisdom, as his dialogue with the monk priest began. The ceiling was high and supported with wood planks, beneath that, a large hall surrounding a massive enshrined sculpture. In this atmosphere, colored by tranquility and silence, the priest started with a simple question.

“What exactly did you come here for?”

“To rid myself of the various worldly desires.”

The priest just shook his head towards Mikado's resolute answer.

“The wish itself to rid yourself of worldly desires is a worldly desire in itself. As long as you wish for something, you cannot escape from any desire.”

“Then...what should I do...?”

“You have to accept it...this world.”

“Accept...the world...?”

Mikado was at a loss.

“Once you accept this world, you will become one with it. There exists an algorithm, and past that is the harmony called Eunatai.”

“I have no idea what you're even talking about!”

However, there seemed to be no problem in his words, so Mikado held back his anger.

“At first, you most likely will be surprised, but eventually, you will be able to see the truth yourself. As your first ascetic practice, we will have you test if the mosaics of AVs are perfectly applied to law criterions.”

“Does that really count as ascetic practice?!”

The priest showed a kind smile.

“It is indeed. On the verge of desire and forfeit, you will very well arrive at the truth. Sex and lust will become inconsequential, and you will join us on the path of enlightenment. Believe. Salvation is right there.”

“...Then, I will. Either way, I don't have any other options available anyway.”

In order to gain strength to stand victorious at the end of the love game, Mikado set foot into the struggle for enlightenment.

One week later, during lunch break.

“H-Hey. Mikado-kun? Am I... a bother or anything?” Mizuki asked carefully, as she forced herself on Mikado's lap in the classroom.

“Of course not. If you want to use half of my chair, you can do that. It's not troubling me in any way.”

“O-Okaay? Your heart's not racing faster by any chance? Or maybe you're panicking?”

“Why would I panic here, or even get flustered? The only thing I am worried about is the possibility of you falling off me, and hurting yourself. So let me help a bit.”

“Hya?! Mikado-kun?!”

Mikado embraced her with his arms, running them down her back. While even Mizuki was growing flustered at that, Mikado's heart was as calm as it could be. Before, his heart rate might have gone up at top speed because of her seductive scent, but there were no signs of that in the slightest. All that filled his chest was the desire to make

sure she would not hurt herself.

“T-This is kind of embarrassing after all...My chest is hitting you...”

“Don’t mind it. A chest is nothing more than fat.”

“Well I do mind it! Also don’t go calling it fat! That’s basically an insult for girls!”

“I will apologize to you, and correct myself then. Breasts aren’t just lumps of fat...they are a rich mix of proteins and liquid.”

“That’s not what I meant! What’s with you today, you’re scaring me!” Mizuki escaped from Mikado’s arms.

She looked like a terrified squirrel, frantically trying to put distance between them. At the same time, Kisa carefully approached Mikado, as if to test him.

“U-Um...Mikado-sama? If you have time after classes today, would you be okay with joining me in my room? There is something I would like to show you...” Rinka started fidgeting, sneaking glances at Mikado.

Though she seemed to be holding herself back, this was clearly an invitation. Her dampened eyes and rosy lips were clearly demanding Mikado’s everything. If this was the Mikado from a week ago, he might have felt his body temperature rise.

“Sorry, but I’m busy copying sutra today. Feel free to invite me another time.”

“Sutra?! You mean Buddhist scriptures?!”

“No, I have to write down all the expertise I gathered from my union with Eunatai, about the truth of this world. It is important to write down the experiences and knowledge we have acquired. Be it humans, society, life itself... the sacred scriptures exist so that we may understand their existence, and how to arrive at the summit.”

“I-Is that so...? Well, if you are too busy with your sutra, then it cannot be helped...” While shaking furiously, Rinka returned to her

own seat.

During that entire scene, Rinka gazed over at Mikado like he had said something horrifying. At times, tears started building up in the corners of her eyes.

“Mikado! Eat this! And there’s no right to decline!” Kisa forced a part of a hamburger into Mikado’s mouth.

Since he hasn’t prayed yet before his meal, he quickly clapped his hands together, enjoying the hamburger quickly after. Having chewed on it 30 times as always, he nodded along in a calm manner.

“Delicious. You worked really hard for me, didn’t you, Kisa? I’m always thankful towards you.”

Kisa was aghast.

“Why?! Why are you so calm?! For today’s lunch, I put the most amount of aphrodisiac in to definitely make you my slave after just one bite!”

Mikado rested his chin in one hand, as he returned a smile.

“Fufu, you shouldn’t go around pulling these childish pranks. Well, that’s also one part of your charm.”

“Why aren’t you getting angry?! This feels weird! Did Mikado get replaced by an alien?!” Kisa showed true fear, as she took a step back.

She looked like a terrified stray cat that was hissing at him.

“Eh, an alien?! When was Mikado-kun turned into an alien?! Parasitism?! I have to take a picture!” Kokage approached the group with her camera, turning the lens towards Mikado.

In response, Mikado crossed his legs whilst sitting on the chair, taking a confident pose.

“Take a good one, okay? Being the son of the Kitamikado Family, I can’t show the populace any pathetic side of me.”

“He actually gave me permission after always ruining my camera with glue?! What’s going on with Mikado-kun?! Well, I’ll gladly take a picture though!” Kokage hesitated for a second, but pressed the shutter of the camera.

As Mikado kept smiling calmly, the girls were watching in mute amazement.

The three girls, Kisa, Rinka, and Mizuki gathered in an empty classroom nearby. Although they were all fighting for Mikado in their own right, there were no signs of the usual sparks of rivalry between them. Rather, it felt more like a coordination of people from all over the world, trying to avoid a natural disaster.

“I’m assuming you know the reason we gathered here.” Kisa gazed around, to which Mizuki and Rinka nodded along.

“Onee-chan finally decided to have Rinka-chan and me drown in Tokyo Bay. You’re planning on taking us to a nearby family restaurant to give us a false feeling of security, only to make us heavier so that we sink faster.”

“Eh, is that true?! I was sure we would be talking about Mikado-sama...”

Rinka’s eyes opened wide in shock, to what Mizuki started explaining.

“Rinka-chan, you can’t let down your guard, okay. Once Onee-chan decides on something, she won’t stop until it’s done. The most important thing is to make contacts in our private corps.”

“I won’t do that today! Just as Shizukawa-san stated, I called you here because of Mikado! Also, if you two disappeared at the exact same time, I would be the most suspicious person, right?!”

Mizuki showed relief.

“I see~ So you’ll make us disappear one by one then!”

“Exactly!”

“Eh, really?!” Rinka took several steps away from Kisa.

They were still enemies in the love game, so it made sense that they would show the highest amount of wariness. Kisa coughed once to get back on track.

“Anyway, the problem at hand is Mikado’s attitude and behaviour recently...It definitely is weird, right?”

“It really is! No matter how much I cling to Mikado-kun, he’s not panicking at all! I even put on the same perfume and underwear as Onee-chan, and even that didn’t get him flustered at all!”

“Since when have you been using that?!”

“Always! It’s the Nanjou Family’s way to use whatever we can, right?”

Mizuki skillfully dodged the impending Iron Claw from Kisa. Meanwhile, Rinka started to ponder about something.

“Recently... When the two of us are eating dinner together, Mikado-sama would always pray for at least 20 seconds...The employees of the store we’re always visiting are completely terrified now...”

“You’re always going out for dinner?!”

Kisa yet again realized her inferior position against Mikado’s fiance. So much that she felt the urge to rename herself Shizukawa Rinka. However, she decided to leave that thought alone for now, as she put one hand on her cheek.

“I wonder what happened to Mikado...? That calm and benevolent Mikado isn’t the real one. The normal Mikado...would try to deny any of my plans at full force, a bastard way too serious for his own good, always thinking like he’s someone better than me!”

Rinka could only gaze at Kisa in amazement.

“You keep talking badly about him like that, but you actually love him, don’t you...?”

“Hya?! W-W-What might you be talking about?! H-How could I have feelings for Mikado?! Really, what kind of accusation is that!?” Kisa pressed both her hands to her burning hot cheeks, furiously shaking her head.

At the same time, Mizuki let out an exasperated sigh.

“Onee-chan...your face is as red as tomato ketchup...”

“It’s not! Why would I get flustered because of such a baseless accusation! I am just agitated, and that is the normal reaction!”

“It really is unfair how you can be pure evil and so cute at the same time, Nanjou-san...” Rinka let out a pained sigh. “I also thought that something was off, so I decided to ask Mikado-sama’s father for any information, and he told me that Mikado-sama has just entered priesthood.”

“Entered priesthood?! Did he become a monk?!”

“Ehhh?! A bald head definitely won’t fit Mikado-kun! Wait... so his current hair is just a wig...?”

“Who cares if it is! Mikado is still Mikado!”

Kisa didn’t care too much if he turned bald, or had plastic surgery, but priesthood would be troublesome. All the things she wanted to do with him after making him her slave would be impossible.

“Apparently, he isn’t aiming to become a monk though, he is just trying to cleanse his head. He’s staying over on the weekend, and has to complete several ascetic practices at a famous temple or the like, to rid himself of his worldly desires.”

“So basically...that’s why he’s in that pathetic state? It’d be troublesome if he lost his worldly desires.”

“Right! I won’t be able to do perverted stuff with Mikado-kun anymore!”

“I still am not handing Mikado over just so you can do as you please

with him, Mizuki...”

At this rate, the love game will be heading towards Kisa’s inevitable defeat. If Kisa’s plans stopped having any effect on Mikado, while she would continue to receive damage, it’d become a one-sided slaughter, an easy win for Mikado.

“Mikado-sama having no interest in being a married couple... I cannot let that happen... I have to steal it aggressively...”

“Steal what?!”

“Kyaa! Rinka-chan, you pervert!”

“And, what should we do now?” Rinka brought the focus back to the original problem with pure feelings, as she gazed at Kisa.

“Let’s put up a temporary joint front here. I don’t know what kind of sketchy Buddhist temple this is, but I will not allow anyone to snatch Mikado away from me. We’ll definitely pull him back to the mundane world with us in it!” Kisa announced, as she crossed her arms.

Inside the peaceful main hall of the temple, Mikado and the priest were sitting next to each other, facing the girls. Kisa, Mizuki, and Rinka were all wearing their own unique and lovable private clothes, dazzlingly staring at Mikado.

“I assume that you all are hoping to undergo our ascetic practices?”

From the appearance itself, you couldn’t even quite make out the sex and age of the priest anymore. With courtesy filling her seiza, Rinka nodded to that question.

“Yes, I am Kitamikado Mikado-sama’s fiancée, Shizukawa Rinka. Watching my husband try to cleanse his soul, I decided to join him in that endeavor. I hope to receive an equal amount of guidance.”

“Good way of thinking indeed. By cleansing and polishing your heart, you will be able to reach a unity with Eunatai. Please, teach them.” Mikado lowered his head towards the priest as well.

“If the young lady of the Shizukawa Family asks me, then I have no

reason to deny it. However...those other two, I can feel darkness and evil emitting from you like I have never seen in this world..." The priest directed their gaze at Kisa and Mizuki.

Kisa countered that with a snicker.

"Everyone keeps saying that about me. I'm just a benevolent, virtuous person towards everyone around me, so I was thinking that maybe people would think differently if I learned at a temple like Mikado does."

"Vir....tuous...?! Onee-chan is?! No wa—!"

Right before Mizuki could finish her sentence, Kisa gave her a quick jab to her side, Mizuki crouched down on the ground and writhed in agony. Kisa didn't even flinch at that, and just kept smiling. At the same time, you could hear the priest gulping heavily.

"...W-Well, n-no matter how evil you might be, now that you have sought help at our temple, we will not close our doors towards you. We will save your tainted soul from the dark world that you are entrapped in."

A high ranked priest just called the soul of a high school girl tainted. In the priest's eyes, Kisa was not a human, but something akin to a monstrous apparition. That's the daughter of the Nanjou Family for you. However, for Mikado, who has already undergone this harsh training, seeing Nanjou Kisa here was a chance. Making her the object of salvation, he could possibly pull her away from the Nanjou Family.

"Everyone, let us try our best from today on. I will try to support you as best as I can."

"Yes...please teach me as thoroughly as possible..."

"Fufufu, I'm really looking forward to this..."

"You better prepare yourself, Mikado..."

Mikado showed a kind and responsible smile, as the other three girls all muttered to themselves, looking at him like a hunter at its prey.

Zen meditation.

This term describes the act of sitting in a cross-legged position and ridding yourself of any idle thoughts to gain complete control over your spirit. An ascetic practice that is made to regain and heal the harmony between body and mind.

It might be simple, but it needs a high level of mental control and the riddance of worldly desires is very effective. Even a normal person, born in the common world will be able to achieve results after three hours... However, having a beautiful girl sitting on your lap for that entire time changes everything.

“Heeey, Mikado-kun? Why have you been keeping quiet for a while now? Come and talk to meee~ Come on? Hey~”

Sitting on Mikado’s lap, while whispering in his ears with her soft voice, she rubbed Mikado on the tip of his nose. A normal person would most likely refer to the past three hours as hell.

“Did you not come here to work on your worldly desires...?”

Even the experienced Mikado couldn’t maintain his focus, and asked Mizuki in a frank, annoyed manner.

“I came here to play with Mikado-kun~! I’m bad with bothersome and difficult stuff!”

“Then go home! This is a place for ascetic practice!”

“Then I’ll do that! Where should I start stripping from?!”

“Why would you strip in the first place?! What kind of training are you planning on doing?!”

“I was planning on sitting next to Mikado butt-naked as you’re doing your own zen meditation, to see if I can bear the cold! My last record was five minutes before I caught a cold!”

“Don’t catch a cold intentionally like that! And that image is way too surreal!” Mikado quickly jumped to stop Mizuki, who was about to

open up the first button of her blouse.

Normally, Mikado would only take this as a joke and that would be the end of the conversation, but that girl sadly isn't normal in the slightest. No matter what you said to try and convince her otherwise, she would strip at all costs. If it came to that, Mikado wouldn't be able to get out of it unscathed. Basically, Mikado would get kicked out as a pupil, and on top of that, reported to the police, which would result in a scandal for the Kitamikado Family.

"Come on, Mikado-kun~ You actually want to play with me, right?" Mizuki snickered in a teasing manner.

"Not at all."

"You don't have to be flustered like that! I know it very well. You were enjoying our date together, right? Your eyes were sparkling the entire time when you saw all those new things~"

Mikado let out a faint sigh.

"That might have been the case back then, but I am different now. I have freed myself from any desire for enjoyment and pleasure. I have become a part of the entire cosmos, with the mindset of the vast space and universe."

"Scary! Mikado-kun, you're scary! You totally got wrapped up in some dangerous religion here!"

Mikado just confidently shook his head.

"It's not dangerous at all. My heart feels even lighter than before. A loaf of bread and a beautiful girl completely look the same to me right now."

"So you want to do perverted stuff with bread now?!"

"The other way around! No matter how attractive your body might be, I will not be influenced by it in any way!" Mikado announced, pushing out his chest.

In order to arrive at this level, Mikado stood beneath a waterfall,

enduring no matter how cold the water was and stepped over burning charcoal with his bare feet. He now possessed the pride and confidence of conquering many challenges like that. He managed to gaze at his true self, and overcame his weaknesses... However—

“Ohh? But, is that really the case? You still have worldly desires left, don’t you~?”

“What...are you talking about?”

“I mean, because I’m riding on you like this, you’re getting all energetic, right?”

“.....!”

Mizuki looked down at her own butt, and snickered.

“That’s just a physiological phenomenon! It’s not related at all to my own intention and philosophy!” Mikado tried to argue.

“I wonder about that~? So it’ll be perfectly fine no matter what I do, right?”

Mizuki put her hands on Mikado’s thighs, and started rubbing her petite behind around while still sitting on Mikado like that, stimulating all five of Mikado’s senses..

“Stop...”

“Come on, come on~ You’re being teased by a middle school girl three years younger than you~ Ahaha, I really like the perverted Mikado-kun, you know?”

“I already...threw away all my worldly desires...”

Mikado forcefully pulled away his consciousness from Mizuki’s body temperature and soft sensation.

“Fufu...Mikado-kun...Let’s play some more~”

Mizuki put her lips just close enough to Mikado’s ears to not touch them, as she softly whispered.

“Finally...escaped...”

Having finished his practice at the main hall, Mikado quickly dashed away from Mizuki, making his way to the baths, letting out an overblown sigh. The entire time up until the main temple building closed, Mizuki continued to torture Mikado as she sat on his lap. Of course, she had no ill-will in this at all. Because she was innocent and cute about it, Mikado couldn't exactly get angry at her, but that doesn't mean that she wasn't greatly destroying any sort of hard work that Mikado put into ridding himself of worldly desires. Having just started this training for about a week, it came as no surprise that Mikado would be faltering at this.

However, before he worried about that, his thoughts drifted towards Kisa. About why she and the others suddenly appeared at this temple. And, if their goal really was to complete this place's training. First and foremost, he wondered if Kisa actually possessed the mindset to go that far, the girl being even more self-conceited than Oda Nobunaga, who would most likely hesitate even less than him¹. The more Mikado thought about it, the more he judged the restoration of her good soul as the utmost priority.

Mikado sunk into the hot water till it reached his shoulders, he felt his own exhaustion start to heal. For tonight, it was reserved just for Mikado, but depending on the season, other people in training would also use this bath, and the temple turns into a sort of bathing place.

“Fuuu...I'd like to visit this place again one day, unrelated to my training...”

As Mikado was resting his body, he suddenly heard the door behind him opening.

Following that were footsteps, as a person entered the bathing place. Wondering who it was, Mikado turned around to identify the sudden visitor.

“What are you doing?! This is the man's bath, you know?!”

Standing there was the immodestly clothed Rinka. Normally she would be wearing clothes that had no skin showing whatsoever, but

now her beautiful skin was on display everywhere. Her long and slender legs with her willowy waist gave her the looks of a goddess. She did have a bath towel wrapped around her tender body, but that was barely an excuse for a cover, as she couldn't hide her well-endowed chest in the slightest. In short, her appearance was basically naked but not quite, making it feel even more erotic than if she was butt-naked. Reflexively, Mikado gulped audibly.

"I-I have come to wash Mikado-sama's back. You must be tired after all that training, aren't you?"

Holding a smaller towel in her hand, Rinka confessed her intentions, as her face burned up. Presumably she was nervous, since her voice was trembling. Her thighs were fidgeting against each other, a truly adorable gesture, but Mikado had no time to enjoy that as her towel was about to fall off.

"No...I'm perfectly fine. Just washing my own body won't tire me out that much."

Though Mikado's denial also grew a bit shakier, he had to get her to leave as quickly as possible. That was just how lively and seductive her body was, as he got close to just staring at her without any restraint.

"Don't hold back like that. I am Mikado-sama's fiance, so of course I would try my utmost to make your life easier as much as I can."

"I am not holding back. You should just treasure yourself a bit more." Mikado forcefully averted his gaze from the approaching Rinka.

As long as he didn't see too much of her now, he would still be able to escape this without receiving too much damage. However, Rinka lowered the ends of her eyebrows, as if she didn't like that response.

"It's because I'm actually treasuring myself that I came here right now. Are you properly aware of the determination that I possess, Mikado-sama?"

"I do...but..."

At that moment, Mikado heard sounds coming from the changing

area before the bath. Even Rinka turned around in shock at that, the two of them grew warier.

“Young master of the Kitamikado Family, how is the water~? If there is something missing or not to your liking, please feel free to tell me!”

Calling out to Mikado with a thick voice was the old man tasked with the tending and service of the bath.

“Y-Yeah, everything is perfect. You don’t have to worry about it.”

“Is that so? Then, I will be finishing my floor cleaning over here, but do feel free to call out to me at any time.”

“Ehh...” A voice leaked out from Rinka, clearly conflicted.

Mikado quickly jumped up to close off her mouth. Even if she was his fiancée, being together in a bath like this, completely naked as they were, it would prove troublesome to clear up. Though it would most likely be very welcomed by Mikado’s parents. Incidentally, because he suddenly jumped up from the water, his lower half, previously hidden by the water, was now fully revealed. Rinka’s gaze was pulled towards it, her eyes turned into small dots.

“Ah...” Mikado reacted too late.

“T-This is...Mikado-sama’s...”

The shock must have been too great for the pure Rinka, as she immediately collapsed on the floor.

“Careful!”

Mikado went to quickly grab Rinka’s body. As a result, he could feel her soft, naked body pressing against his. Her tender skin, as well as her two bulges were a two-hit attack on Mikado’s brain.

“Ugh...!”

Mikado quickly tried to turn his consciousness towards the pure and proper, but he didn’t make it in time. His body temperature rose up exponentially as he equally lost his balance, collapsing on the floor. A

big splash of water rose up into the air. Mikado fell on his back, completely defenseless since he was covering for Rinka. Through the chest that was pressing down on him, he could perfectly feel her heartbeat. Droplets of water came falling down from her slim chin, onto Mikado's lips.

"Mikado...sama..." Rinka muttered, seemingly still a bit intoxicated from the previous sight.

Every light disappeared from her eyes, as she just gazed down at Mikado.

"You're not hurt anywhere? You okay?" Mikado showed worry and concern, to which Rinka shook her head.

"I am most definitely not okay! In...in this situation...how could I...?"

"Eh...?" Mikado grew concerned about her reaction.

"I can't...hold back anymore..."

After she barely forced out those words, Rinka opened her lips. Appearing from that opening was her red tongue, which she used to lick down Mikado's cheek.

"Hey...Rinka...?"

"Haa...Mikado-sama's cheek...So delicious...I could lick this for hours..."

"Rinka?! Are you really okay?!"

"Haa...Haaa...Licking my husband..." moaned Rinka, as she ran her tongue over Mikado's face.

"Respond to me! You're really scaring me with that, so please respond! I don't remember my fiancée, called Shizukawa Rinka, being like this!"

Mikado at least wanted to understand what she was even doing to him at that moment.

“When I was younger, specifically when I got haircuts, I would always receive some candy as a reward...however...Mikado’s cheek is at least 100 times more delicious!”

“I don’t care about an old story like that! And I’m not candy either!”

“Haa...Mikado-sama...I will lick every corner of your body...”

Rinka wrapped her soft arms around Mikado’s neck, as she softly whispered.

Mikado found himself unable to sleep well. Whether it was because of the sudden appearance and attacks from the girls, or because his body was tired from all the training these past few days, Mikado did not know. He was only sure of the very fact that his sleep was not very deep. Inside a tatami-floored room provided by the priest, Mikado opened his eyes. His limbs were stiff, and he found trouble in breathing freely. His eyelids felt as heavy as lead, and no matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t open them. Since he felt the hardness of the futon, he realized that it wasn’t his own room at home. However, the pillow below his head had a sensation he had never experienced before. Although the surface felt soft and spongy, it also had a certain sense of solidity deeper down.

“Fu...Fuu...Fuu...Fuuu~”

Close to him, he could hear rough breathing akin to a wild beast. A soft scent ran up his nasal cavity.

—W-What...is this thing?

Mikado tried his best to push his body up, but it felt like his body was bound down by strips of metal.

—Is this..sleep paralysis?

Mikado could feel a cold sweat run down his cheek. Though he had experienced these feelings several times before, this was the first time it had felt so real. Both fear and frustration started to well up inside his body. However, even after a bit of time had passed, this sensation did not lighten in the slightest, so Mikado could only forcefully push open his eyelids.

“...Oh my. You’re awake.”

Eyes emitting pure impurity started down at Mikado from a close distance.

“.....!!”

His voice was about to leak out, but ‘it’ just pressed down on his mouth with the palm of a hand. It was the soft, smooth sensation of skin. Since his nose was left untouched, he could still breathe perfectly fine.

“Shhhh, keep it down, or you’ll wake up the others.”

It was a slightly panicky voice, a one that Mikado was very familiar with.

—Eh...?

Getting a closer look, it was neither a youkai nor a demon gazing down at him, but Kisa. However, there was even greater malice leaking out of her than from even the demon lord. Great killing intent, as well as the pure desire to eat one’s soul washed at Mikado’s body, sending a shiver down his spine, still, her face itself was as beautiful as ever. Right now, she was wearing a very suggestive and lascivious babydoll. Past the very thin and almost see-through clothing, he could spot her snow white skin.

Apparently, Mikado’s head was currently resting on Kisa’s thighs. Experiencing the so-called lap pillow that he had never felt before, his heart quickly accelerated past its normal speed.

“What...are you doing...?” A meek, husky voice came from Mikado.

His consciousness felt heavy, as if he was given some sleep medicine during dinner, and the tips of his fingers were numb.

“Now...I wonder...?” Kisa just showed a charming smile, as she took out some sort of metallic stick from the pillow.

It shone quite sharply in the moonless night. Identifying it as a weapon, Mikado tried to pull his head away in fear.

—I'll be done in!

Mikado prepared himself for death. Whilst not even knowing why he would be killed right there, he was left unable to resist nonetheless. However, no matter how long he eventually waited, no blood spilt from his head, and instead...

“Coochy-coo...”

“Ugh...?!”

Kisa just pushed one end of that stick into Mikado's earlobe, rubbing it against the interior. Everything, extremely carefully.

“If you're going to kill me...just get it over with...!”

“I won't kill you! Even if I killed every single person in this world, you'd be the only one I would leave alive!”

“A living hell?! Then, what are you doing here?! What's your goal?!”

Kisa gave a faint snicker.

“I think this was called...Ear cleaning?”

“Ear...cleaning...?”

Now that she mentioned it, Mikado finally realized. Though he was a bit perplexed at Kisa being the one doing it, with this tool and her movements, there was no mistaking it.

“But...why would you enter someone else's room to clean their ears...?”

No matter how much he turned and twisted the facts, that single truth didn't make any sense. Murdering him in cold blood in absolute darkness, that would make sense. Well, he still wouldn't quite grasp the reason behind it, but it was far more logical than Kisa cleaning his ears for no reason like this.

Isn't that an action that can only begin once both people have agreed to it? At the very least, it isn't something that should happen out of

the blue like this.

“You should be able to understand it as well, Mikado... Ear cleaning like this is pretty much the same as an act of reproduction.”

“I don’t understand it, and I don’t want to either.”

“Well think about it this way. The ear’s peripheral nerves are surprisingly developed, and all your body’s acupuncture points are focused there. If you stimulate such a sensitive mucous membrane, you will fall into pleasure... It’s exactly like an act of reproduction!”

“Is...that so?!”

Mikado received a huge shock. That would mean that he was basically masturbating while cleaning his own ears.

“Exactly! Currently, you are doing indecent things with a woman that isn’t even your wife. And, once you have experienced this pleasure, you will have to listen to every single word I speak!”

“Shit...! As if I’d let you have it your way!”

Mikado tried to escape from Kisa’s soft thighs, but his body wouldn’t move. Even though he should have awakened already, it felt like he was still suffering from sleep paralysis. In reality, he was actually being restricted by visible metal strings running around his entire body.

“This is...?! ”

“So that you can’t resist me, I prepared something fitting, nothing more. How about you just give in now? After this, you will become my victim of love for the rest of your life...and then, you will return to the world of desires...”

Laughing in anticipation, Kisa shoved the stick into Mikado’s sensitive hole. From then on, she softly, oh so softly moved it along the interior, to guarantee utmost pleasure.

“Ugh...Ah...”

The pleasure originating from his ears ran through this brain like an electrical current, forcing a moan out of Mikado's mouth.

"Ara, what a cute voice. Can you really call yourself the successor of the Kitamikado Family, faltering because of something like ear cleaning?"

"Sto...p..."

"Fufu, there's absolutely no strength in your words, I see. Just go ahead and give in to me, and become my slave for all eternity...I will let you drown in pleasure for all eternity..."

Lovingly caressing Mikado's earlobes, she pushed the cotton swab deeper into his ear. Near his eardrum, she continued to carefully move around. Pleasant goose bumps ran down Mikado's back. With her devilish smile, her current attire overflowing with her odor, as well as the soft feeling at the back of his head, Mikado could feel himself approaching his limits.

"You better...remember this..." Mikado forced the words out of his parched throat.

"Of course I will. The face of Mikado, melting away because of pleasure. But, there might just be the chance that you won't even be able to remember it..." Kisa's soft voice ran out in the scorching hot and passion-filled room.

Mikado was busy chanting sutra. He pushed both his hands together as forcefully as he could and continued chanting sutra in the open main hall of the temple.

"Disperse, my worldly desires! Disperse, my worldly desires! Disperse, my worldly desires!"

He forced out all the desire and lust his young body could hold. He had to forget about the sensation of Mizuki's butt at all costs, he had to forget the silhouette of Rinka's well-endowed chest at all costs, he had to ban any desire of wanting to feel Kisa's ear cleaning ever again.

Though he didn't know what the girls were thinking by assaulting

him like this, he could not show any reaction to it. He had to become one with Eunatai.

“Fuu...finally back to my senses...”

As a result of the sutra chanting, Mikado felt the burning hot desire in this body simmer down to a comfortable degree. Any unholy lust and desire was slowly drifting out of his body as his soul closed in on reaching zen.

“...Fufu, what futile resistance.”

He suddenly heard Kisa's temptatious voice behind his back, a hot breath reached his ears. That alone made his hip grow weak, as he had to put one hand on the ground to support his body. His desires were all rekindled, making all his training for naught.

“Y-You...”

“What's wrong? Did I bring you down just by breathing on you?”

As if she wanted to tease him, Kisa pushed her face closer to take a peek at his. Since it was noon time, she was properly wearing a blouse and skirt, but the memories of her attire the previous night were flashing back into Mikado's head.

“You're staring like crazy. Was I really that good last night?”

“Of course...not...”

“Full of lies. You keep remembering the feeling of my ear cleaning, forcing you to react this way. Sutra won't help you.” Yet again, she brought her lips closer to Mikado's ear.

“As if I'd let you!” Mikado jumped away.

“Oh...are you running now? As long as you stay in this temple, you won't be able to run away...”

With two ear picks in her hands now, she approached Mikado who was trying to gain distance, walking through the main hall. If he were

to experience a double ear cleaning, he didn't have the confidence that he'd be able to stay strong through that.

"Now...prepare yourself!"

Like a leopardess, Kisa jumped at him, forcing Mikado to pick up the speed as he dashed out of the hall.

Kokage snuck from thicket to thicket, looking for a chance to press the shutter of her camera. Since she had been crouching on the dirty ground for a while now, the sleeves of her uniform had gotten dirtied greatly, but she paid no mind to that. Her skirt was equally flipped up in disarray, but she didn't try to fix that either

—I have to get the biggest scoop ever!

Kokage arrived at this mysterious temple around three days ago. Having caught wind of information regarding the young followers of the Kitamikado, Nanjou and Shizukawa Family having entered this temple, her sense of smell for a scoop went off like never before. Recently, she kept spotting the three families' successors together, so there must be something going on behind the scenes. And, finding the biggest scoops in history was engraved in the Kawaraya Family bloodline.

—Hm? There's some noise coming from over there...

Picking up a familiar voice resounding from the main hall, Kokage slipped through the shadows towards that location. Using the lens to get a better view of the situation, she spotted three girls having an intense verbal battle.

"Nanjou-san! It should have been my turn, right?! We were talking about splitting up turns in order to fix Mikado-sama's behaviour, weren't we!?"

"Right right! It should have been my try, so why are you just going and blowing into his ears like that!? Unfair!"

At the guardrail of the main temple building, Rinka and Mizuki were aggressively closing in on Kisa. However, Kisa herself showed a calm expression like always.

“Our goal is to bring back Mikado to the world of desires, and to take him away from this temple. It shouldn’t matter how we do that, or who does it. It’s far more efficient to use the most effective method against him so that he won’t be able to run away, right?”

“T-That might be the case, but still...I am not satisfied by this!”

At first glance, Rinka might have seemed a calm and dignified young lady, but today, she was oddly agitated.

“So that means we can just do whatever we want as well? You’re fine with that, right, Onee-chan? All we have to do is get him out of this place. That’s what you said.”

“W-Well, yeah.” Kisa nodded, albeit rather hesitantly.

“Then I will just do as I please as well. Without hindering the other person’s advances. All so that we can get Mikado-sama out of here.”

A bright smile appeared on Mitsuki’s face.

“Right! Everything will be forgiven as long as we cure Mikado-kun!”

“Y-Yes, it’s all to cure Mikado...It’s not related to affection at all...” Kisa muttered.

—What is going to happen to Mikado?! Will he turn into a merman?!

Kokage yet again felt fear after picking up this conversation. Fear for her classmates who she had believed to be of the good kind. As a member of the information broker family, she could not ignore this situation. In order to not miss this decisive moment, she decided to follow Mikado everywhere with her lens.

“If it comes down to it, I have to save Mikado myself!”

With these feelings, Kokage dove deeper into the thicket again.

The soothing chirp of the birds and the bright morning sun entered through the opened paper sliding door. The tatami mat gave off a vivid herbal scent. On top of that, a sweet scent tickled his nose together with one akin to fresh flowers. Thinking that his futon was

softer than usual, Mikado slowly opened his eyes. Mizuki was using his arm as a pillow, sound asleep.

“?!”

Mikado’s body stiffened up in response.

“Munya....Hehe...Mikado-kun, you pervert...” Mizuki was sleep-talking cutely.

There was even a bit of drool running down her soft cheek. Mikado guessed she might have just been wearing a shirt, because the feeling on his legs were oddly natural. At the same time, he felt two big bulges pressed against his back. The black hair widening behind him looked oddly familiar.

“Sniff... Mmm...This is...Mikado-sama’s morning scent...Haa... wonderful...” groaned Rinka, his fiance, as she sniffed him.

She might be thinking that Mikado hadn’t woken up yet, or maybe she even lost herself in the act.

—No wonder my futon felt so soft this morning!



Mikado's consciousness shot wide awake immediately. Being surrounded by two girls, Mizuki from the front, Rinka from the back, he couldn't move his body. If someone saw them like this, they would most likely get the wrong idea about it, no doubt. And of course,

right when Mikado arrived at that conclusion, Kisa stepped inside the room.

“Mikado, are you awake? I was thinking of doing a morning wa—”
Mid-sentence, Kisa’s eyes opened wide.

Being wrapped between her little sister and his fiance, with a sweet scent all over, Mikado’s brain was a tick behind.

“...Sorry for disturbing.” Kisa tightly pushed her lips together, and stormed out of the room.

“Wait! Kisa! Hold on!” Mikado got up from the futon lightning-fast.

“Fuah?! What’s going on?! An earthquake?!”

“Mikado-sama?! You were awake?!”

Mizuki showed pure surprise and uncertainty at what was happening, while Rinka panicked, worrying that Mikado might have heard everything just now. Nevertheless, he just left those two behind in the room, put on his zôri² and chased after Kisa.

He had never seen such a pained expression on Kisa’s face before. He had never heard Kisa apologize with such words. He didn’t know why she would receive such a huge shock from this. Her heart was as difficult to grasp as a cloud soaring through the open sky, and he could never truly manage to gain her trust. However, even if that was the case, he couldn’t leave her alone. Just by merely reminiscing about her meek and fragile expression just now, he felt a sharp pain run through his chest. Even more than all those times when she tried to seduce him, he felt an intense urge to tightly embrace her. Mikado ran, kept running, and ran even further.

Dashing through the gravel of the temple grounds, slipping past the sacred tree, Mikado didn’t stop once. When Mikado finally caught up to Kisa, she had just set foot into a small copse, far away from the main temple. She must have been in such a rush that she didn’t put on her zôri, since her feet were covered with dirt.

“...Here, put these on.”

When Mikado took off his own sandals to hand them over to Kisa, she just kept quiet as she followed his instructions. An awkward silence followed, with Kisa not uttering a word as she just gazed down at the ground. Unable to bear that atmosphere anymore, Mikado struck first.

“I was just as surprised as you, you know? I didn’t think that I’d wake up with the two of them next to me like that.”

“That’s a lie. Being surrounded by cute girls like that, you must have been enjoying yourself. You must have welcomed them. Of course, a man would always prefer being surrounded by beautiful women, it’s in their nature, their instincts.” A cowering voice. Kisa wouldn’t even try to look at Mikado.

“No, I...”

“This game was supposed to have only been between Mikado and I!” Kisa’s shoulders jolted up, as she formed fists with her tender hands.

“Eh.....”

“Why did those two strong girls have to enter as well?! They’re clearly better, and more lucrative than me! Even though...even though I was the first one! I have to be the one to capture you! So why?! Tell me, why?!” Kisa screamed at the top of her lungs.

“Kisa.....”

Mikado didn’t know how to respond to that. The normally arrogant, and overconfident Kisa suddenly brought out her honest feelings, not even trying to hide it under a lie.

“I’m sure that Shizukawa-san or Mizuki are a better catch than me. You must have already done it with them, right? You’re already a father of two, right?!”

“Aren’t you jumping the gun here?!”

“I’m not! Rather, I missed the gun! Mikado is just the worst kind of man! Unlike me, you’re liked by everyone, kind to everyone, someone that goes to save as many people as he can! You’re human

trash! You idiot!” Insulting Mikado in the weirdest way possible, she grabbed hold of Mikado’s chest.

Big, round tears were building up in her eyes as she glared up at him. Just by that, Mikado felt a thorn stab right through his heart. Whatever the reason might be, he couldn’t forgive himself for having made the girl in front of him cry. He wanted to wipe away her tears.

“Please...don’t cry.”

“I-I’m not crying! As if the successor of the Nanjou Family would cry from something like this! I would never...cry...”

Kisa tried her hardest to hide her tears with her hands, but they just kept flowing. Her delicate lips were shaking. In this place, surrounded by trees on all sides, this adorable devil in his arms seemed so small and fragile that she could break into a thousand pieces with just a faint gust of wind. Mikado unconsciously felt his arms reach out towards her in an attempt to embrace her, but he stopped himself halfway and muttered a response.

“I...know about your good qualities.”

“Eh...?” Kisa’s eyes opened wide.

Mikado took a deep breath, steadying and preparing his voice. Saying it again would be embarrassing and he was afraid that she’d be able to grasp his weakness through this, but he had to put those feelings into words.

“You...guided me to a new world. Guided I, who only knew the rules of the Kitamikado Family, and brought me to a new, wider world. Ever since I met you at that party back then... you were like an eagle, freely able to soar through the open skies, and I followed you with my eyes.”

“I-Is that really a good idea... calling a girl an eagle...?”

Though Kisa pouted, showing discontent at Mikado’s description, she did not avert her gaze from him. Her eyes, looking as if the whole void of the universe was resting behind them, wanted to hear more words from Mikado, she wanted to hear his feelings. Drowning in

that exact feeling emitted from her, he calmly continued.

“Looking at Kisa is fun. You laugh, you panic, you act all proud and you show me fighting will. Just by watching your ever changing expression, I find joy in living myself. Wondering about what kind of trap or plan you’ll try next, how you’ll fail at that, I always find myself looking forward to it.”

“I’m not failing at it! Did I ever really fail?!” Kisa complained, her face burning up like a tomato.

“Look, that face. Your angry face...is just as cute.”

“Uuuu...Ah...C-Cute...?”

Her reddened facial expression turned from anger to embarrassment. That gesture of hers, looking up at Mikado in hesitation, sent a shiver of happiness and joy through his body. He softly grabbed the Kisa’s wrist. She showed no signs of pushing him away, instead just gulping heavily.

“I have to make you mine at all costs. Your body, your heart, your soul, everything. The only person I want to win against in this battle, and make my slave, is you... Kisa. You, and only you.”

Yet again, tears started to build up in her eyes. Kisa jumped onto Mikado, who was unable to stand his ground and fell backwards onto a bed of leaves. As Mikado layed on the ground, Kisa rubbed her head against his chest. At the same time, she wrapped her arms around him, softly whispering.

“Idiot... you know that I will be the winner of this game. You’ll be the one turning into a slave.”

“Nobody can tell what the future will bring,” Mikado laughed.

“No, I can. I will make you mine at all costs. Because I decided on that. I will not hand you over to any other woman.”

Her charming eyes gazing directly at him, the soft and pleasant feeling of her body, the palms of her hands wrapped around his neck and the sweet scent reaching up from her body, everything made

Mikado's heart beat faster.

"Hey... Mikado. It's okay...right?"

"What...do you mean...?" Mikado responded, his throat dry.

Kisa's damp eyes turned towards Mikado's lips.

"It's fine... this isn't an expression of my affection, but just a way to bring you back to the normal world...a way to cure you..."



If it's unrelated to the game, then it should be fine, Mikado found himself thinking. No, he wanted Kisa's everything, so even if his brain told him to, he wouldn't be able to move a muscle now.

“Kisa...”

“Mikado...The thing is, I actually...”

The second their lips were about to overlap.

“Ahhh, I can see Onee-chan and Mikado-kun~!”

“W-What are you doing?! What kind of situation is this?!”

“I’ve encountered the decisive moment!”

Both Mizuki and Rinka spotted the two of them at the same time. Even Kokage appeared, sliding in, where she pressed the shutter at the best possible timing. Following that was a dazzling flash. Immediately after, Kisa jolted up from Mikado, who equally tried to put distance between the two.

“You were about to kiss there, right?! You were about to do perverted things, right?!”

“We didn’t! We’d be total perverts if he did it outside in the woods like this!”

“Then where else were you about to?!”

“Nowhere, and nothing at all! That just now was an accident. There was this huge earthquake just now, so I fell over, all natural!”

“I didn’t feel a single bit of an earthquake! A loose excuse, nothing more!”

“Confess! We already have enough proof!”

Both Rinka and Mizuki were aggressively closing in on them as Kisa turned beet red. Because of so many things happening at once, she must be having trouble keeping calm.

—As troublesome as always.

Mikado let out a sigh. He broke in between the three girls and took Kisa’s hand by force.

“Eh, wai—Mikado?!” Naturally, Kisa was perplexed.

“Just follow me! This is the morning walk you mentioned before!”

Pulling her by the hand, he started a full-speed dash. As they went deeper into the thicket, Kisa returned the grip on Mikado’s hand.

*

They arrived in the deepest recesses of the forest. The seven year old Kitamikado and Nanjou Kisa were puzzled. After running away from the ruckus at the party, they just kept moving forward without taking notice of their surroundings, and had now gotten completely lost.

“How troublesome... because you blew up the cake, we ended up like this.”

“You were the one who did it, right?! I kept warning you not to, and you even wrangled me into this! It’s all you!”

“But...I thought it would be fun.”

Kisa was puffing out her cheeks, but her slender knees were shaking. She must be putting on a confident act, but was actually quite scared right now. Their surroundings had gotten completely dark, and the cold of the night was slowly closing in on them. From between the trees in the distance, they could hear the sounds of unfamiliar animals. Even if it was someone from the Nanjou Family, ruling over darkness itself, a seven year old girl like her would be scared either way.

“Come here. It’s probably over there.”

“Eh, you know the way?”

As Mikado started walking, Kisa quickly lined up next to him.

“From the position of the stars, I can barely figure out our position. At the very least, we should come out at a bus stop.”

“Ohhh...you’re actually pretty reliable.”

“That’s to be expected from the kid of the Kitamikado Family.”

“Hmmm...”

Being stared at by Kisa, Mikado felt weirdly bashful. The rivalry between the Kitamikado Family and the Nanjou Family had been going on for a long, long time. And now, their freshest newcomers were suddenly in such a bizarre situation. Just walking along while keeping quiet would have been too awkward, so they exchanged some words.

“...Say, you’re always alone at parties. Do you not have any friends?” Mikado asked.

“Same to you, you’re always alone as well,” Kisa retorted.

“I’m not alone by any means. I’m just busy greeting everyone, that’s all.”

“So you’re all alone. That just means that you don’t have any friends either. You always look so lonely at the parties after all.”

“.....”

Her hitting the bullseye made Mikado swallow his words. He was planning on returning that remark with his usual flawless smile, but he was worried that she would be able to see right through that.

“The Kitamikado Family stands at the top of Japan, carrying forth its light. There is nobody who wants to approach us purely seeking friendship.”

“Same here. Since I’m from the Nanjou Family, who rule Japan’s darkness, nobody dares get closer to me, they’re all scared.” Kisa’s body shivered, unable to resist the cold anymore.

In her eyes was a shadow different from the darkness she was talking about. Kisa put one hand on her waist, as she pouted.

“Also, everyone’s just way too dumb! No matter what I say, nobody gets it! They’re all just rotten in their heads!”

Mikado nodded along.

“Really gets you fed up with the guys that are just in it for the profit. They’re just giving me the creeps with their fake happy attitude!”

“Just because I have good grades, everyone gets jealous of me! They just have to work harder themselves if they’re not satisfied!”

“They all say how nice it must be to grow up in a family like mine, but it’s not all that great. I have to study every day, there’s training even between that.”

Both of them heated up as they kept on rambling.

“...Nobody understands us, our feelings.”

“Do you want them to?”

“Not... really. What about you, aren’t you lonely?”

Kisa asked about the Mikado’s innermost emotion, to which he averted his gaze.

“I’m not... lonely at all.”

“Neither... am I.”

They just muttered, while holding the other’s hand. Like this, they wandered through the deep forest.

[1](#) Refers to the Siege of Mount Hiei in 1571, where Nobunaga burned down around 300 temples and other buildings in the vicinity

[2](#) traditional Japanese thronged sandals

Epilogue

On the rooftop of Sousei Academy, Kisa, Mikado, as well as Rinka and Mizuki were enjoying their lunch boxes. In order to not stand out in their classmates' eyes, and so this weird group consisting of the Kitamikado Family, Nanjou Family, and Shizukawa Family could meet in peace, they made it a habit to eat up on the rooftop.

"I'm so glad that you finally came back, Mikado-sama." Rinka let out a relieved sigh.

"I know right~ I thought you might just turn into a girl!" commented Mizuki, her cheeks stuffed full with Mikado's lunch.

"How would I turn into a girl with such an event...?"

Whilst answering, Mikado himself wasn't quite sure what was going on with him.

"Well, what worked the best were my tears in the end! I really am the strongest!"

"You were crying for real though."

"I-I keep telling you that I wasn't crying for real! It was just a trick, a trick I say!"

As Kisa's cheeks started to burn up ever so slightly, she tried to talk herself out of it. But Mikado knew. The Kisa back then didn't have even an inch of defense left in her. She showed the deepest depths of her heart. Now, she cleared her throat in a bashful manner.

"A-Anyway. The words you said back then were truly wonderful. 'I have to make you mine at all costs,' was it?"

"Stop it. Don't dig up my dark past." Mikado tried to stop Kisa before she could embarrass him any further, but she showed no intentions of doing so.

On the contrary, she pointed her index finger at him, as she continued.

“Your body, your heart, your soul, everything. The only person I want to win against in this battle, and make my slave, is—”

“I keep telling you to stop, right?!”

“Mguh?!”

Mikado swiftly moved to close off Kisa’s mouth. Though the soft sensation of her lips ramped up his body temperature a bit, he had to ignore that if he didn’t want to be embarrassed even more. At the same time, Kisa also went red to her ears, slowly calming down. Meanwhile, Rinka and Mizuki were watching them.

“They got even closer than before...”

“Yes...Nanjou-san is way too strong...”

The two of them muttered in a worrisome manner.

Mikado’s student life was always doing favorably. Although the love game was still going strong, his distance with Kisa had shrunk yet again. If he kept hammering away at her defense for a bit longer, he could even finish this soon. At this rate, things would be looking good.

That’s what he thought to himself as he arrived home, where he was greeted by a servant. Apparently, his father was immediately calling for him. Since the head was always busy, that would rarely ever happen, and the last time had been back when he told him about his fiance Rinka.

—I wonder what it is...?

Mikado tilted his head in confusion as he made his way to the office. Mikado had always found trouble entering this place because of the heavy atmosphere, but the pressure was especially strong today. Upon entering, the head greeted Mikado with crossed arms, a heavy frown on his face.

“...Mikado. What exactly is this about?” It was a sharp tone, one that he would often use when things were serious.

“What do you mean...?”

Getting a bad premonition, Mikado carefully asked in response. The head didn't even bother answering, and just slid him a single picture on the desk. Shown there was Kisa, clinging to Mikado, a situation which happened in the thicket near the temple. Most likely, the picture was taken by Kokage back then. Both Kisa's yearning expression, and Mikado's comforting attitude were sharply depicted.

“.....?!”

Mikado felt like his heart was about to leap out of his chest. The worst kind of scenery that nobody besides them should have ever even touched the surface of was seen by the worst person imaginable. With a gaze that could even kill a demon, the head glared at his own son.

“Mikado, you...don't have any reprehensible relationships with the Nanjou daughter, do you?”

Afterword

Hello there, barely alive Amano Seiji here.

Finally...I finally made it through the death march! Ever since last year in December, I've been writing novels, writing scenarios, writing novels, writing scenarios writing novels, writing scenarios... I want to sleep! I want to eat rice! The days were back like when I had barely debuted, but now I finally survived through it. My only food for the day was cup ramen, and I really thought I was going to die there. As a result, there's been a lot of announcements on social networks or official pages.

What is this Amano guy doing now? A light novel author? An aspiring writer? A scenario writer? An otomege writer? A utility writer?

You might be confused and filled with these questions, but don't worry, the person himself doesn't really know either. Hence, a lot of works are officially announced. For now, let's talk a bit about this novel though.

In this volume, Rinka and Mizuki finally joined the game as well, and the love game turned into chaos. Using their weapons as a fiancée and younger little sister, they tried conquering Mikado yet again from a different approach to Kisa.

The illustrations were as beautiful as ever, especially the color illustrations of Mizuki! I especially liked the drenched one of hers. It should definitely not have been indecent in any way... but it totally is, and it's really cute. All girls should be wearing shorts like that, with a half-cut t-shirt. I want to emphasize that until the day I die. Kakao-sensei, thank you very much.

My editor, Usami-sama, everyone from the GA Bunko editorial department, management, as well as publishing, I have been in your care as always. You're true angels for accepting me.

To everyone who has picked up this novel right after the first one, I

thank you from the bottom of my heart. Those that have spoken about my novel online, telling their friends or the like, the world needs more people like you. I will keep writing this heated love game battle between Kisa, Rinka, and Mizuki, so please continue to support me as you have before.

This has been your soldier who barely survived the fatal battle,

10th of April, 2018, Amano Seiji.

Credits

Translation Group: Cclaw Translation

EPUB is done by JLN